CONGO LIFE AND FOLKLORE

Rev J.H.WEEKS

London County Council.

— ✂ —
Nonley School.
Central

EXAMINATION, A.D. 1912.

— ✂ —
Awarded under the Gift of
the late

Mr. Francis Peek

AND THE

Religious Tract Society

TO
Alfred Seitz

FOR

Excellence in Biblical Knowledge.

(11/10/10)

15.00

1/5

CONGO LIFE AND FOLKLORE

Photo]

A NATIVE VILLAGE.

[*Rev. R. H. Kirkland*

THE MAIN PATH ON WATHEN STATION.

(Note the "Welcome" Banner.)

DT
G50
W4X
1911
MAA

CONGO LIFE AND FOLKLORE

PART I

LIFE ON THE CONGO

AS DESCRIBED BY A BRASS ROD

PART II

THIRTY-THREE NATIVE STORIES

AS TOLD ROUND THE EVENING FIRES

BY THE

REV. JOHN H. WEEKS

(BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY)

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY

4 BOUVERIE STREET; & 65 ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, E.C.

1911

TO
MY COLLEAGUES, LIVING AND DEAD
WHOSE ARDUOUS LABOURS AND FAITHFUL LIVES HAVE
REDOUNDED TO THE GLORY OF CHRIST, AND
TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HIS KINGDOM IN CONGOLAND
AND TO
THOSE CO-WORKERS IN THE HOME-LAND
WHOSE GENEROSITY, PRAYERS AND KINDLY WORDS HAVE
SUPPORTED, STRENGTHENED AND ENCOURAGED
THEM ALL THESE YEARS, THIS BOOK
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

PREFACE

A BRASS rod is the money of by far the larger number of the people on the Lower and Upper Congo. In thickness it is not quite so stout as an ordinary slate pencil, and varies now in length, according to the tribe using it, from five inches long on the Lower Congo to an indefinite length among the more distant tribes of Congo's hinterland. Originally the brass wire was employed on the Congo for purposes of ornamentation, either of the person in the form of necklets, armlets, and anklets, or of articles they greatly prized and wished to decorate. It was beaten into ribbons and wound round the hafts of their favourite spears, paddles, and knives which were only used on gala days; or the wire was melted down, and, with much skill, made into personal ornaments. I have seen brass necklets weighing twenty-eight pounds, and have taken from a woman's legs brass rings that weighed in the aggregate nearly sixty pounds. It is probable

that at first this brass wire changed hands in lengths of several fathoms, and gradually pieces of a certain length were sold at a fixed value, and thus it became in due time the article of common exchange—the currency, the money of the country.

For a considerable time the writer has been interested in the folklore and anthropology of the people, and has made long and careful notes on such subjects, and some of this information he has worked into the story. For obvious reasons much must be left unwritten ¹ in a popular book; but that which finds a place in the following pages can be accepted as perfectly trustworthy and true to Congo life. The missionary and other experiences are founded on fact, the views and prejudices of the natives are faithfully portrayed and are not exaggerated, and the native superstitions have, as shown here, resulted in innumerable cases of murder by ordeal, and the killing off of the most progressive natives, possessors of inventive genius, of irrepressible energy and of great skill—the best men, who would have

¹ It may interest those who would read further on the folklore of the Lower Congo people that in *Folk-Lore* (the Journal of the Folk-Lore Society) for 1908, 1909, 1910, and 1911 more detailed articles will be found, which were furnished by the writer.

been the leaders of their people and would have left them more advanced than they found them but for the witch-doctor and the ordeal.

By writing under the guise of a Brass Rod, worn first round the neck of one owner and then round the arm of another, the writer has had more scope, and he hopes has been able to make the scenes from life more realistic than he could have done by the ordinary method. And the reader will find that the book deals much more largely with the people of the country—their habits, customs, views of life and superstitions—than with the scenery.

The book has been written during the intervals of deputational work; and its object is to lay clearly before the reader the ingrained prejudices, the curious views, the tremendous and all-pervading superstitions, and the mighty forces that have been arrayed against the introduction of Christianity into that benighted land, and how, in spite of such forces against it, the evangel of Jesus Christ has triumphed more wonderfully than our poor faith and often blundering efforts have deserved.

It is hoped that superintendents, Sunday-school teachers, leaders of Christian Endeavours and of

missionary prayer-meetings may find that the reading aloud of some of these chapters will awaken in their scholars and hearers a deeper sympathy with missionary work, and that ministers and teachers will discover in the stories told around the Congo fire, which form the second part of this volume, *new nails* upon which to hang old truths.

JOHN H. WEEKS.

*Baptist Mission House,
19 Furnival Street, Holborn.*

CONTENTS

PREFACE	PAGE vii

PART I

CHAPTER I

EN ROUTE TO CONGO

<i>I am packed in a box—Sent to Congoland—My journey on the ocean steamer—Curious names of the Kroo boys—Landed at Banana—Thrown on the deck of a river steamer . . . . .</i>	I

CHAPTER II

MY JOURNEY UP THE CONGO

<i>Our captain and tyrant—River scenes—We camp at a trading-station—Native riddles . . . . .</i>	6

CHAPTER III

MY OVERLAND JOURNEY BEGINS

<i>The white man's fetish—I am exchanged with others for rubber and ivory—My new companions express freely their opinions about the white men—Why the white men are on the Congo—Native suspicions and prejudices . . . . .</i>	12

CHAPTER IV

WE REACH THE TOWN OF MY OWNER

<i>Crossing the Mpalabala hills—The head man knocks his toes—It is an evil omen—He visits the "medicine man"—Finds his brother dying—Last hours of the dying chief . . . . .</i>	19

CHAPTER V

A FUNERAL ORGY

	PAGE
<i>Satu becomes chief—Preparations for the funeral feast—My box is opened—I become a neck ornament—Bakula, my new owner, is smart, but superstitious—The mourners assemble and present their gifts—The toilet before eating—Drunkenness and quarrelling—Corpse is carried to the grave—A white man wants to steal the ivory trumpets—He is shaved and sent about his business . . . .</i>	24

CHAPTER VI

OUR TOWN LIFE

<i>Streets are irregular—Houses small and draughty—Their reception, dining, and drawing rooms are in the open air—Their many charms and fetishes—Routine of the day—Bakula tells a story: "How the Sparrow set the Elephant and the Crocodile to pull against each other"—Tumbu, a slave, relates the tale of "The Four Fools"—And Bakula tells: "How the Squirrel won a Verdict for the Gazelle"</i>	34

CHAPTER VII

THE SEARCH FOR THE WITCH

<i>People believe their chief died by witchcraft—They send for the witch-finder—His arrival and antics—The ceremony of discovering the witch—Satu's brother, Mavakala, is accused—Why was Mavakala accused?—He takes the ordeal—Proves his innocence—Other tests are forced on him—He is done to death . . . .</i>	49

CHAPTER VIII

VISITORS ARRIVE

<i>The dulness and pettiness of native life—Arrival of two visitors—Bakula questions them about the white man—They relate the little they know about him—Old Plaited-Beard stirs the people up against the white man—They exchange their views about him—They agree to oppose him—The white man is seen approaching—He is driven from the town and has to sleep in the bush . . .</i>	58

Contents

xiii

CHAPTER IX

SOME CUSTOMS, GAMES, AND A JOURNEY

	PAGE
<i>The Luck-giver is called to bring prosperity on the town—His mode of procedure—Satu and some of his people go on a visit to a great chief—Good and bad omens—The game at "Antelope"—Bakula narrates a story: "How the Fox saved the Frog's Life"—Another lad tells why inquiry should come before anger—The difficult road—Bakula and his friends dress themselves—Their mixed ward- robes . . . . .</i>	69

CHAPTER X

OUR RECEPTION AND ENTERTAINMENT

<i>The welcome of Tonzeka and his people—A case judged—We find the white man in Tonzeka's town—Tonzeka defends the white man—He complains of the effect of the white man's preaching—A drunken bout . . . . .</i>	89

CHAPTER XI

SATU VISITS THE WHITE MAN

<i>Bakula goes to the white man to have his wound dressed—White man puts in a good word for the traders—Bakula is touched by the white man's kindness—A native dance—An exhibition of native pride—A long talk with the white man—We gain many new ideas from our conversation—Bakula has another interview with the white man and they become good friends . . . . .</i>	100

CHAPTER XII

NATIVE GAMES AND PASTIMES

<i>Make-believe games—"Biti" and needle—Game with canna seeds—Hoop game—"Mbele," or Knife game—The story of "The Four Wonders," or a puzzle story—Conundrums—"The Adventures of the Twins" . . . . .</i>	114

CHAPTER XIII

BAKULA ACCOMPANIES AN EMBASSY

<i>A title reverts to Satu—He sends Old Plaited-Beard to the King with a present—The embassy arrives at the King's town—Has an audience in the King's house—King promises to send a deputy to install Satu—King dines with the white man and sees a magic lantern—Bakula and the white man renew their acquaintance—He sleeps on the Mission Station and hears all about the King's household . . . . .</i>	PAGE 131

CHAPTER XIV

BAKULA STAYS WITH THE WHITE MAN

<i>The working of a Mission Station—Buying food—The school—Bakula is afraid to enter the school—Repairing the station—Boys work in the gardens—A quarrel, and how it was settled—An evening's chat with the white man—Rubbing evil spirits out of a man—Sunday service—Congregation—Sermon—Visit to a near town—Religious talk with the King—Boys pray for their white teacher—Witch-doctor's trick exposed . . . . .</i>	148

CHAPTER XV

SATU RECEIVES A TITLE

<i>The King sends for medicine—He is told to apply to St. Catherine—The King's promise—Bakula bids farewell to his white friend—King's deputy goes with us to Satu's town—Ceremony of conferring the title—Killing a leopard—Satu redeems his brother—Releases his niece from a hateful marriage—A story: "Appearances are sometimes Deceptive"—A chief asks for Satu's niece in marriage—Marriage money is paid—The wedding—Satu gains a new slave . . . . .</i>	167

CHAPTER XVI

HUNTING AND BUSH-BURNING

<i>Manner of bush-burning—Witch-doctor makes a hunting charm—Ceremony is carefully performed—Blazing bush and rushing animals—Satu arranges with another chief</i>	

Contents

XV

	PAGE
<i>to burn the bush—Dimbula breaks the law and insults Satu—War is declared—Old Plaited-Beard being unsuccessful accuses Bakula of bewitching him—He tries to restore his luck . . . . .</i>	194

CHAPTER XVII

SATU AND HIS PEOPLE GO TO WAR

<i>Satu as the insulted party makes the first move—He sends an embassy to Dimbula—He asks for an apology or offers a bullet—The apology is refused, but the bullet is accepted—The witch-doctor makes a war charm—Mode of fighting—The ridge-pole of chief's house is captured—Dimbula sues for peace with a white goat—Pays homage to Satu—Blood brotherhood is made . . . . .</i>	212

CHAPTER XVIII

GOVERNING, MARKETING, AND TRADING CUSTOMS

<i>The making and enforcing of laws—Fines imposed—Division of fines—Congo week of four days probably named after their markets—Raids and robberies—Preparing a caravan for the road—Rules of the road—Arriving at a trading-station—Mode of trading—Goods given and received . . . . .</i>	223

CHAPTER XIX

AN ACCUSATION AND THE ORDEAL

<i>Old Plaited-Beard charges Bakula with stealing—The accusation is denied—Bakula declares his disbelief in charms and witch-doctors—Satu saves him from immediate death—The missing cloth is found in Bakula's house—Tumbu exposes the accuser's trickery—He is ridiculed—Bakula submits to the ordeal of the boiling oil—His arm is badly scalded—During the night Bakula escapes to the Mission Station. . . . .</i>	240

CHAPTER XX

BAKULA AT SCHOOL

<i>After much nursing Bakula recovers—He becomes a school-boy—He struggles with the alphabet—He learns to understand pictures—Routine life—Bakula itinerates with his</i>	

	PAGE
<i>white man—He does not relish sleeping in the wet bush— He is convicted of sin—He inquires the way of salvation —The lads play a trick on a witch-doctor—Bakula is received into the Church—He returns to his town . . .</i>	252

CHAPTER XXI

BAKULA'S WORK CHECKED

<i>The conservatism of the Congo people—Bakula and his scholars build a school-house—A missionary visits his town—He encourages Bakula in his work—A "luck fowl" dies—Its death is put to the credit of the missionary's visit and teaching—The school-house is pulled down—Satu is afraid to interfere—Native way of punishing an unpopular chief. . . . .</i>	267

CHAPTER XXII

BAKULA FALSELY ACCUSED AND MURDERED

<i>Failure of various remedies—Witch-doctor engaged—Diag- nosing a case—Different "medicine men" are called in— Bakula denounces their trickery—Suspicion of witch- craft falls on Bakula—Native attempts to rid themselves of death, sickness, etc.—Preparing a corpse for the grave —Bakula is accused of bewitching his mother to death— He is guarded by Old Plaited-Beard through the night—He is taken to the hill-top—He falls and is done to death— Tumbu buries the mangled body of his friend . . . . .</i>	274

CHAPTER XXIII

I FIND MANY CHANGES

<i>Mikula while digging the foundations for a brick house dis- covers me—The town is changed—There is daily worship —Observance of the sabbath—Sunday service—Collections for support of teachers—Christian funeral—Visit to the Mission Station—Teaching teachers—Martyrs for the cause . . . . .</i>	294

Contents

xvii

CHAPTER XXIV

A MARRIAGE AND A HARVEST FESTIVAL

	PAGE
<i>A Christian wedding—Grateful offerings—Christianity a great boon to the women—Reunion—Various meetings—Lady missionaries conduct services—Auction sale of the gifts—Changed lives—Mikula instructs a stranger in the way of Salvation—Rules for candidates and for Church fellowship . . . . .</i>	307

CHAPTER XXV

MIKULA AT THE CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

<i>Months glide quickly by while working hard—Deacon's meeting—Church-meeting—The kind of candidates who were rejected—Baptismal service—The great meeting of the Church—Election of deacons—The balance sheet—A deficit—Native Christians wipe out the debt—Local missionary meeting—The great communion service . . .</i>	326
NOTES TO PART I	341

PART II

NATIVE STORIES TOLD AROUND THE EVENING FIRES IN CONGOLAND

<i>Introduction . . . . .</i>	361
I	
<i>How the Fowl evaded his Debt . . . . .</i>	371
II	
<i>Why the Small-ant was the Winner . . . . .</i>	374
III	
<i>How the Animals imitated the Gazelle and brought Trouble upon Themselves . . . . .</i>	376
IV	
<i>Why the Fowls never shut their Doors . . . . .</i>	379

	PAGE
V	
<i>Why the Dog and the Palm-rat hate each other</i>	382
VI	
<i>The Leopard boils his Mother's Teeth</i>	384
VII	
<i>How the Ants saved the Partridge's Eggs</i>	386
VIII	
<i>The Leopard sticks to the Nkondi (wooden image)</i>	388
IX	
<i>How the Mouse won his Wife</i>	391
X	
<i>The Gazelle outwits the Leopard</i>	396
XI	
<i>The Gazelle punishes the Palm-rat for breaking his promise</i> .	399
XII	
<i>How the Crow cheated the Dove and got into Difficulty through it</i>	401
XIII	
<i>How the Civet and the Tortoise lost their Friendship for each other</i>	403
XIV	
<i>The Water-Fairies save a Child</i>	406
XV	
<i>How the Squirrel repaid a Kindness</i>	410
XVI	
<i>The King-fisher deceives the Owl</i>	415

Contents

xix

PAGE

XVII

How the Tortoise was punished for his Deceit . . . 416

XVIII

How the Frog collected his Debt from the Hawk . . . 419

XIX

How a Child saved his Mother's Life . . . 422

XX

How the Gazelle won his Wife . . . 425

XXI

The Gazelle is at last punished . . . 429

XXII

The Leopard pays Homage to the Goat . . . 433

XXIII

Why the Owls and the Fowls never speak to each other . . 436

XXIV

How the Elephant punished the Leopard . . . 439

XXV

How the Leopard tried to deceive the Gazelle . . . 441

XXVI

The Story of two Young Women . . . 443

XXVII

Why the Chameleon cut off his own Head . . . 445

XXVIII

Why the Congo Robin has a Red Breast . . . 447

	PAGE
XXIX	
<i>The Leopard tries to steal the Gazelle's Wife . . . .</i>	449
XXX	
<i>The Gazelle kills the Flies and Mosquitoes, and outwits the Leopard . . . . .</i>	451
XXXI	
<i>The Leopard is badly tricked by the Gazelle, Rat, and Frog .</i>	454
XXXII	
<i>Why the Small-ants live in the Houses . . . . .</i>	460
XXXIII	
<i>The Son who tried to outwit his Father . . . . .</i>	462
INDEX	463

The following Stories will be found in Part I

- CHAP. VI.—*How the Sparrow set the Elephant and the Crocodile to pull against each other (p. 39) ; The Four Fools : a puzzle story (p. 43) ; How the Squirrel won a Verdict for the Gazelle (p. 46).*
- CHAP. IX.—*How the Fox saved the Frog's Life (p. 77) ; Inquiry should come before Anger (p. 81).*
- CHAP. XII.—*The Four Wonders : a puzzle story (p. 122) ; Adventures of the Twins (p. 126).*
- CHAP. XV.—*Appearances are sometimes deceptive (p. 182).*

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Facing Page

A NATIVE VILLAGE	} <i>Frontispiece</i>	
THE MAIN PATH ON WATHEN STATION .		
THE LOWER CONGO RIVER NINETY MILES FROM THE SEA		10
A CONGO HUT		10
THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL AT NKABA . . .		58
JUNGLE PATH THROUGH THE FOREST		84
WATHEN: THE BOYS' QUARTERS		100
WATHEN: THE DISPENSARY		100
SCHOOL-BOYS PLAYING HOCKEY		116
AT THE GIANT STRIDE		116
GYMNASTICS		116
BUSY WASHING		128
RESTING AFTER WASHING		128
SCENES IN CATARACT REGION		166
A WITCH-DOCTOR		166
NATIVE ROPE BRIDGE		202
NATIVE BRIDGE		202

	<i>Facing Page</i>
WHITE TRADER AND NATIVE TRADERS AND THEIR PRODUCE	236
THE REV. JOHN H. WEEKS AND HIS BOYS	252
CLOTH WEAVING	258
BLACKSMITHS	258
CATS' CRADLES	284
A PROTECTIVE FETISH	284
DEACONS OF WATHEN CHURCH	304
TEACHERS WORKING UNDER THE WATHEN CHURCH	304
A CHRISTIAN WEDDING	312
CHURCH COLLECTION AT WATHEN	312
A NATIVE MARKET	332
BAPTISMAL SERVICE, CHRISTMAS 1905	332

PART I

Life on the Congo

AS DESCRIBED BY A BRASS ROD

THE BRASS ROD

[*The currency of the Country*]

LIFE ON THE CONGO

Chapter I

En Route to Congo

I am packed in a box—Sent to Congoland—My journey on the ocean steamer—Curious names of the Kroo boys—Landed at Banana—Thrown on the deck of a river steamer.

I AM much older than you think, for it is more than twenty-five years ago since I was born in a great factory in one of your English towns. The years that have passed since my birthday have been filled with joy and sorrow, rest and toil; but in looking back over them I think they have contained more sorrow and toil than rest and joy.

When I was born I was very tall—nearly thirty inches high; but instead of growing taller I have become shorter, being only¹ eleven inches long now, for my enemies have cut off one little piece after another to melt down for brass ornaments. Folk think more of finery than of honesty. I must

¹ See note I, p. 341.

not, however, anticipate my sorrows, for they came all too soon.

Soon after I was born I was put with many other brass rods into a dark box, and nailed in very tightly; for I heard one of the workmen say that I was to take a very long journey over sea and land. There was fortunately a hole in my box, and looking I saw that we were first put on a train, and then carried into the hold of a big ship. Soon after we were all packed carefully and tightly in the hold, the steamer began to move, and we could hear the creaking of the rigging and the rattling of the racing engines, and feel the pitching and rolling of the great steamer itself.

I felt very glad when the pitching and rolling stopped, and the cover was taken from the hold, and the beautiful sunshine came streaming in, making the rats scurry off with their young to dark corners and cracks.

Just then we heard the bang of a cannon and the shrill scream of a whistle; and, wondering what was going to happen next, we heard the babble of many voices, and the patter of naked feet along the deck; and a voice shouted: "There, our gang is complete. We don't want any more, and the sooner you others get over the side into your canoes, the better for your health."

I heard an old palm-oil barrel who had taken this journey many times remark to a new one: "We are now off the Kroo Coast, West Africa, and have taken on Kroo boys¹ to work the cargo and keep the decks clean. That bang of the cannon was to call them, and the whistle was to hurry them."

I do not know how many Kroo boys we engaged; but they were very noisy, and gave us many a sleepless night. At four o'clock in the morning, while we were at sea, they began to rub the decks with stones and scrape the ironwork with knives, talking incessantly all the time; but when we were in port it was worse, for they not only worked the winches right over our heads from early morn till late at night, but they came down into the hold, turned us over and pitched us about so that if I had not had a good wooden box round me I should have been badly bent and bruised. Some of my friends were smashed to pieces, and some bales I knew received deep gashes in their sides, and others I never saw again.

It was a sad journey, full of partings, for those Kroo boys never came into our hold without tying up some of my friends, and we saw them for a moment hoisted into the air, and over the side

¹ See note 2, p. 342.

they went, into what?—I knew later, but not then.

What curious names those Kroo boys had! Some of them still linger in my memory, such as: Peasoup, Teacup, Bottle-of-Beer, Brass-pan, Top-hat, Kettle, Arm-chair, Pen-and-ink, Kiss-me-quick, Flower-vase, Napoleon - Buonaparte, and Duke-of-Wellington.¹ I learned afterwards that the reason why they had these names was that their white masters, not being able to pronounce their proper country names when they first engaged them, gave them any name that happened to come into their heads at the moment, and such names stuck to them all the days of their service on the coast. It was amusing to hear these names called, or, when one was asked his name, to hear him answer: "Me, massa, me be Bottle-of-Beer."

The Kroo boys good-humouredly retaliated by giving their masters names that picturesquely described any peculiarities they observed in them. One they called Big-nose, another Skinny-legs, another Long-legs, and a fourth Bald-head. There was more appropriateness in the names they gave their masters than the names they received from them.

About seven weeks after we started my box was tied with others, hoisted into the air, and thrown

¹ See note 3, p. 342

over the side of the ship into a big boat, and we were rowed ashore and landed at Banana. As we were going a Kroo boy spied me through my peephole, and tried hard to drag me out of my comfortable resting-place; but I clung tightly to the others, and thus successfully resisted his attempts to steal me. I soon found myself in a large store filled with huge piles of boxes, bales, and crates, and long rows of large bottles filled with rum and other fiery waters.

After a few days a white man came into our store, and, sorting out a large number of cases, bales and bottles, sent them away on the heads and shoulders of Kroo boys. For two days they were carrying out loads as quickly as they could, and just as I was thinking that I should not be disturbed a Kroo boy came and lifted my box in his strong arms, and, carrying me across the busy, sunlit yard, threw me with much force on the deck of a steamer, and I became unconscious.

Chapter II

My Journey up the Congo

Our captain and tyrant—River scenes—We camp at a trading-station—Native riddles.

WHEN my senses returned I found my box was piled on deck with many other boxes like it, and thus I had a fine view. The sun was rising, flooding the river with its brightness, lighting up the distant hills and throwing into sombre shadow the mangrove trees that lined the banks. There was much hustling and shouting on board as the ropes were cast loose; and I soon began to feel the throb of the engines, and hear the rush of the water as the small steamer pushed its way against the strong current that was hurrying the mighty volume of the Congo to the sea.

On reaching mid-channel I could see that the trading-houses of Banana were built on a narrow tongue of sand, having on one side the Atlantic Ocean constantly rolling and sometimes madly rushing as though it desired to tear the very tongue out of the mouth of the river; and on the other side the gentle lap, lap of a back current of the river itself.

The Congo is said to be fifteen miles wide at the mouth—from hills to hills; but it does not look so wide because of the islands and mangrove swamps that hinder a clear view of the whole width, and narrow one's vision to the channel in which you are steaming.

From my position I had an easy view of the deck of our small steamer. There were only two white men on board—a captain and an engineer; the former was a short man, who never spoke without swearing, and never gave an order without punching or kicking one of the black crew. He had a large rubicund nose, hideously coloured by frequent applications to the bottles that were always on his table. He was privately nicknamed by his crew as Red-nose, and was thoroughly feared and hated by them all. Many of them were slaves and could not get away from him, and others had contracted for one or two years' service, and if they ran away they would have lost their pay; but notwithstanding this some did escape, preferring loss of pay to constant brutal treatment.

The current was too strong to remain long in mid-channel, so the steamer went near to the bank and pushed and fought its way, with much rattling, throbbing and panting, from point to point of the various bays. When the water was too swift to be conquered at one place, the

steamer, snorting with defeat, crossed the channel and worked its way up-river on the other side.

There was not much to be seen—no hippopotami, no crocodiles, and very few natives in canoes, and only an occasional trading-station on low-lying, swampy land surrounded by palm-trees, plantain groves and vegetable gardens. Here and there men were to be seen fishing with large oval nets. They stood on the rocks by which the water rushed tumbling and foaming in its hurry to reach the sea, and dipped in their nets with the mouths up-stream, and, pulling up the whitebait thus caught, laid them on the rocks to dry. Others made small fences by the river's bank about eighteen inches apart and three feet long, and into these they put small scoop-shaped nets, and drew up the small fish that had passed between the fences.

By sunset we reached a trading-station belonging to my owners. Our steamer was quickly tied to the bank, and all made secure for the night. The men soon had some fires lighted along the beach, and saucepans of food boiling on them, and pieces of meat roasting in the ashes. Groups gathered round the fires, and after a hearty meal of rice, ship-biscuits and meat, they became very talkative, and soon started asking riddles. Some of these riddles I still remember after all these

changeful years; and I will try to tell you a few of them.

A Loango man named Tati seemed to know most riddles,¹ and he was called upon to make a start. After much persuasion he asked: "What is this? *The stick is very little; but it has a number of leaves on it.*" One after another attempted to give the answer, but as they all failed, Tati said: "The answer is—*Market*, because it is a small place, but has a lot of people on it." They chuckled with delight over the neatness of the riddle, and demanded Tati to give them another.

Tati sat in a brown study for a few minutes, and then, looking up, said: "*There were five buffaloes; but only four tracks.*" Semo, who was Tati's rival in this game, instantly cried out: "*Fingers*" as the answer, because while there are five fingers on a hand there are only four tracks, *i. e.* spaces between them.

Semo was then asked to give one, and without a moment's thought he cried out: "*My father's fowls laid their eggs under the leaves.*" All kinds of guesses were made; but at last admitting their failure, Semo said: "*Peanuts,*" and of course they all saw it at once—peanuts grow under the ground beneath their own leaves.

¹ See note 4, p. 343.

Semo was called upon for another riddle, and after a short pause he said : "*I went to a strange town, and they gave me one-legged fowls to eat.*" This one also was too difficult for them to guess, and after many attempts Semo had to give the answer, viz. *Mushrooms*, which have only one stalk (*i. e.* one leg) on which to stand.

Soon after this the talk became general, and gradually died away as one by one they rolled themselves in their mats and went to sleep, leaving the fires brightly burning to throw out warmth to the sleepers and to frighten away hippopotami, crocodiles and sundry other creatures. During the night the snorting of hippopotami could be heard as they gambolled in the shallow water near the bank ; and occasionally the switch of a crocodile became audible as it hurried by in search of food for its cruel but never-satiated jaws ; many noises also came from the dark forest just beyond the settlement, that filled the night with weirdness and made the first glow of dawn welcome to men, birds and beasts.

Just as the sun peeped above the eastern horizon bells began to ring, and the whole station awoke to life. My friends, the crew, hurriedly came from their mats, and were soon carrying bales, boxes and bottles ashore, under the directions of a white man, and in an hour or so all the goods for that

A CONGO HUT.

THE LOWER CONGO RIVER ABOUT 90 MILES FROM THE SEA.

We conquer the Mighty Current 11

station were discharged, and the steamer was pushing its nose against the strong current of brown, oily-looking water to the next up-river station.

The higher we ascended the river the narrower it became, and the more powerful was the rush of water on its ever-scurrying way to the sea. Whirlpools opened up at the most unexpected places, making the steamer roll and pitch, and straining the engines until they panted and groaned in their never-ceasing struggle with the giant current. Twice we were twisted round in a place called the Devil's Cauldron and carried down-river, but at the third attempt the giant was conquered, and an hour or so later we were tied up to a wharf at the highest point on the Lower River.

Just below us the river narrows between steep hills to a mile and a quarter in width, and through that funnel more than twenty thousand miles of rivers empty themselves into the "cauldron" which constantly seethes, bubbles and boils with the rush of water tearing over its rough, rocky bottom.

Chapter III

My Overland Journey Begins

The white man's fetish—I am exchanged with others for rubber and ivory—My new companions express freely their opinions about the white men—Why the white men are on the Congo—Native suspicions and prejudices.

THE morning after the steamer arrived all the goods were taken ashore, put into a huge store, and arranged in their places. Just opposite the store door was a large image, gaudily coloured and grotesquely ugly. It was a fetish¹ that the white man had bought of a native "medicine man," and had placed it there in the store to frighten the natives and deter them from stealing. Of course it was no use, for the natives knew that no "medicine man" would sell a real fetish to the white man, consequently it did not overawe them, nor keep them from thieving when they had the opportunity.

I had not been in the store many days when the box in which I was packed was carried out and handed over to some natives who had brought some tusks of ivory and rubber to the white trader

See note 5, p. 343.

for sale. From what I heard it had taken them a long time to settle the price; but directly that had been agreed upon they quickly selected their goods, viz. forty pieces of assorted cloth, ten barrels of gunpowder, fifteen flintlock guns, one box of brass rods, two demijohns or large bottles of rum, five cases of gin, and some common looking-glasses, knives, beads and various other trinkets.

I was carried, with the other trade goods, to the native sleeping-quarters, and found my new owners were not tall men, but wiry, lithe, strong fellows, who, after they had bound us with ropes in long baskets, commenced their tedious overland journey to their town far in the interior. Before sunset we had crossed the hills, descended the valley, and forded by means of a canoe the Mposo river. The boys of the party collected wood and fetched water, and very soon bright cheerful fires were blazing, and the camp resounded with much chatter and laughter.

Most of the talk was about white men and their strange ways. One laughed at them for having such a silly fetish in their store. "Why, I know," said he, "the 'medicine man' who made it; and he told me himself that he had put no strong charms in it, as he was not going to hurt his own people for any white man; but the foolish white man gave plenty of cloth and gunpowder for it."

Another asked if they knew Fomu,¹ a white man who lived in the next district? "Well, he put a weight under his scale, and cheated us for a long time; but we found him out, and at first we would not trade with him again, until some one found a way to punish him for defrauding us."

"What did you do?" asked another.

"Well," answered the first, "we procured some bananas and coated them with rubber, and sold them to him as solid rubber; and it was a long time before he discovered it, and then we had to cut every lump of rubber into pieces; but I think we recovered what he stole from us." There was a hearty and good-humoured laugh over this playing off of one trick against another.

Just then an old man with a long plaited beard chimed in: "Yes," he said, "I had a friend who lived in a part of the country where, instead of using brass rods as we do, they use strings of blue pipe beads as money—a hundred beads on each string. One day my friend sold some ivory to a trader there, and received some packets of beads as part payment; but when he arrived home he found that instead of there being one hundred beads on each string there were only sixty. He was cheated out of forty beads on every string,

¹ Most white men are known to the natives by native names.

and before he could pass them on the markets he had to make them up to the proper number.

"After that no native would deal with that trader unless he gave two strings of beads in the place of one, so he lost in trying to cheat us.

"Pish!" exclaimed the old man, "the white men are cheats! They put heavy pieces of iron under their scales to rob us; they put lumps of stuff in their measures to rob us; they give beads in short numbers to rob us; when we work for them they beat us just before our term is finished so that we may run away without our pay, and when we have carried loads for them they often pretend we have stolen from them so as to have an excuse for not paying us."

The old man had worked himself into a rage as he recalled wrong after wrong; but his voice was drowned in a burst of laughter that came from a group sitting round another fire. "What are you laughing at?" he shouted aggressively.

"Not at you, father," respectfully answered one of the young men. "We are laughing at what we heard yesterday: A trader had treated his house boys, his people, and his customers very badly for some time, so some of them met together one evening, went to his house, and stripping him of his clothes, they carried him into the bush, and

rubbed him well with cow-itch, and then let him go. He had a very bad time; but he has been better to his people since that night."

There was much snapping of fingers and chuckling over this joke played on the white man.

"For what purpose does the white man buy rubber and ivory?" asked one of the boys of the old man with the plaited beard.

"I don't know," replied the old man. "When I was a boy we made pestles and trumpets of the ivory, and drumstick knobs with the rubber; but I think the white man only buys rubber and ivory to hide the real reason of his presence in our country."

"What is that?" asked the lad.

"Well," said the old man, with a knowing look in his black eyes, "the white man does not like the work of making cloth, hence they come to this country to buy up all the bodies of those who die to send to their country to make cloth for them. They preserve the bodies in their stores until there is a good opportunity of sending them away in their steamers; and when these bodies reach Mputu (the white man's country) the spirits are forced to return to them by the magic of their great 'medicine men,' and then they are compelled to work for them as their slaves.

"The white men have very strong magic, sur-

passing the magic of our people; but if the white men were not here, very few, if any, of our people would die. Why, a friend of mine told me all about it the other day. He said: 'In the sea there is a hole,¹ and the white man goes in his steamer to this hole and rings a bell, and the water sprites push up the end of a piece of cloth, and the white man pulls on it one day, two days, three days, until he has enough cloth, and then he cuts it off and measures it into pieces, and binds it into the bales, as we see in their stores. But before he leaves the hole he throws into it some bodies he has bought in our country.' Yes, the white men are very wicked, and don't you have anything to do with them. Why, all your relatives who have died are now, perhaps, slaves in Mputu, and some day you may be the same."

A thrill of horror went through the gaping crowd as the old man in graphic language and with dramatic gestures told these things. When he had gained his breath he began again.

"The other day I heard of some exceedingly wicked white men who pretend to tell people about God, white men who will give you medicine if you ask for it, and will teach you in a school how to read and write, and will even take you into their houses and clothe and feed you. Beware of

¹ See note 6, p. 344.

those white men, for they are only trying to secure you, and you will soon die and become their slaves in Mputu. The other white men say: 'We have come for rubber and ivory,' and we receive plenty of trade goods from them in return for our rubbish; but these very wicked ones say: 'We have only come to tell you about the great God, and to help you.' They are more crafty, cunning and wicked than the others. Keep away from them always, or you will quickly die!"

By the time the old man had finished there was a large circle of horror-stricken natives around him, who, with many a cry of rage and hatred against such evil doings, promised never to go near such wicked wretches as these white men were, and with many an oath they threatened they would kill them if ever they had the opportunity.

Soon after this the fires were replenished, and men and boys curled themselves in their mats and cloths, and went to sleep dreaming of the cruel wickedness of white men. And all through the night the river went gliding by to the great Congo and on to the sea to lose itself in the waters of the Atlantic; and it took no warning to the white men who were leaving home, friends, and family to tell such as those who slept on its banks of the great and good God.

Chapter IV

We reach the Town of my Owner

Crossing the Mpalabala hills—The head man knocks his toes—
It is an evil omen—He visits the “medicine man”—Finds
his brother dying—Last hours of the dying chief.

THE next morning was dull and damp—a weeping morning, and every one shivered with the cold as they hastily picked up their loads and prepared for the steep ascent that would take them over a spur of the Mpalabala mountains. The road was a narrow track, steep and stony; huge boulders were often in the path, and had to be climbed over or avoided by detours, thus making the way difficult and tiring. By ten o'clock the sun was shining brilliantly on the white stones, making the eyes ache with their glare and the body perspire with their reflected heat. The men panted beneath their burdens from the heat, and water was very scarce.

By midday we had passed the steep and wearisome hills of Mpalabala and were camped in the valley by a pleasant stream.

Just before arriving at the resting-place the head trader unfortunately struck his toes against a stone, and, being very superstitious, he was filled

20 We reach the Town of my Owner

with horror at the evil omen. It was the general subject of conversation as to what this omen predicted. One thought that a wife of the head trader was dead; another suggested that his house and goods were destroyed by fire; and thus they prophesied one evil after another until Satu—the poor fellow who had struck his toes—could hardly rest at the midday halt; and he certainly put on a very woebegone appearance, for he had no doubt some great misfortune had befallen him or was about to happen to him. This fear so played on his mind that he had disturbed sleep and bad dreams that night; and often started out of a nightmare screaming that his sister or his wife was dead, or his house was burnt to the ground.

The next day a large town was reached, and Satu sought out the “medicine man” there, who was famous through all the countryside for the wonderful power of his fetish, and the charms he made from it. Satu told him how he had struck his toes against a stone, and his fear of the evil omen, and asked the wizard to avert the evil. Some of his companions laughed¹ at him for wasting his money over such nonsense, while others, who were more superstitious, advised him to fee the wizard well, and thus enlist his power to stave off the threatened mischief.

¹ See note 7, p. 344.

This particular "medicine man" had a charm which was called *Kimbaji-mbaji* (meaning, to-morrow), and any person who came under its protection could not be harmed because he who wanted to hurt him always put off the carrying out of his evil intentions until to-morrow, and, as you know, to-morrow never comes. The special charm used by this wizard was a shell full of various herbs which had been pounded, mixed and rammed into it.

The troubled man took a fowl to the wizard, who killed it and poured some of its blood into the shell, which he then placed on the ground, surrounding it with eight little heaps of gunpowder. After dancing about them for a short time, and chanting an incantation over them, he exploded the powder and blew his whistle vigorously. These ceremonies aroused the charm to work effectively in the postponement of the evil spells that were being used against the man. The wizard received twenty brass rods as his fee; and Satu went on his journey satisfied that the omen could not now work against him.

Satu, however, found on his arrival home that the wizard's power was ineffectual in his case, for his brother, the chief of the town, was very ill and nigh unto death. Hence their arrival, instead of being acclaimed with the loud shouting of women

and children, and the firing of many guns, was greeted with the solemn headshakes of the men, the crying of the women, and the beating of drums by the "medicine men."

The patient was apparently so bad that as a last resort they had called all the "medicine men" of the district together in the hope that their combined force would rescue the man from the malignant influence of the evil spirit—the *ndoki* that was killing him. All night long they had been drumming, shouting, beating gongs, and parading about the town calling on the evil spirit to desist, but without avail, for the chief was now dying, and Satu had only just arrived in time to receive his brother's last wishes about his property and the names of those who owed him money, and slaves.

All the goods brought from the coast were piled in the chief's house so that he might gloat with dying eyes on his increased wealth, and curse in strong, passionate language the *ndoki* who was causing his death.

From my fortunate spy-hole I could with ease view the weird scene. It was a small hut built of grass and sticks tied neatly and securely together. There were two doors, but no windows, and the smoke escaped as best it could through crevices in the walls and roof.

In the far corner, lighted by the flickering flame of the wood fire, was the chief, lying on a bamboo bed covered with a papyrus mat, and squatting on the floor were numerous women—the hut was crowded with them—loudly talking, and freely giving their advice on the best way of curing the patient. Some suggested one particular charm, others argued in favour of certain rites and ceremonies; but all were angry with the witch (*ndoki*) who was regarded as the cause of all the mischief; and they were unanimous in their demand that the witch should be discovered, tried by the ordeal, and killed.

In the early hours of the morning the chief died. The female members of his family, old and young, set up a howl of rage and grief—rage because the witch had killed their chief, grief because their relative was dead. The men fired off their guns to frighten away evil spirits, to give expression to their sorrow, and to inform the spirits in the great, mysterious forest town, whence all the souls of the dead go, that a great man was coming to join them.

Upon Satu rested the responsibility of the funeral, and every detail had to be scrupulously observed, or the spirit of the deceased would trouble them as a family, and perhaps cause their extinction.

Chapter V

A Funeral Orgy

Satu becomes chief—Preparations for the funeral feast—My box is opened—I become a neck ornament—Bakula, my new owner, is smart, but superstitious—The mourners assemble and present their gifts—The toilet before eating—Drunkenness and quarrelling—Corpse is carried to the grave—A white man wants to steal the ivory trumpets—He is shaved and sent about his business.

AS the deceased chief was a very great man it was necessary to postpone his burial for a month or two until fitting arrangements for a grand funeral could be conveniently made, otherwise his spirit would not be satisfied, and trouble would follow.¹ Moreover, if the chief had been hurriedly buried like an ordinary man, the whole countryside would have accused the family of meanness and selfishness in wanting to keep the dead man's wealth for themselves. Therefore the body was dried, wrapped in a cloth and placed in a hut built for the purpose.

Satu sent to all the markets day after day for miles round, buying up every goat, sheep and pig

¹ See note 8, p. 345.

that was offered for sale. Having collected a large number of animals he then began to send out invitations to the funeral ceremonies. It was decided that on the eighth *nkandu*¹ market day the rites should begin. All messengers sent to chiefs with an invitation had to take with them one or two goats, according to the chief's importance, "to feed them and their followers on the journey" to the mourning town.

At the commencement of these preparations my box, in which I had travelled so far, was opened, and I should have been sent with many other brass rods to the markets in exchange for goats or pigs; but a lad took a fancy to me, and begged to give an old brass rod in my place. My new master, whose name was Bakula, turned over my two ends, and, hooking them together, he wore me round his neck as an ornament, and as he polished me brightly every day I was well able to see all that happened about me.

My new owner was a free-born lad of high spirits, alertness and agility, quick at all games, successful in all kinds of sports; but like many of his seniors, held the women and girls in great contempt except when he wanted a favour, and then he could cajole and flatter them until their eyes sparkled with pleasure and they became his

¹ See note 9, p. 345.

slaves. He was, however, very superstitious, had many charms tied about his person, and regarded the "medicine men" with great awe and admiration. Bakula quite believed that his success in hunting, his smartness at games, and his general good fortune were entirely due to his charms and the regularity with which he made sacrifices to them.

The appointed day for the funeral was drawing nigh, so the preparations were pushed on apace. Large quantities of cassava flour¹ were prepared and an immense number of *kwanga*² loaves were bought at the different markets, and demijohns and calabashes of palm-wine were ordered for the three days' feasting that were to precede the interment.

The eventful day at last dawned, and during the morning and early afternoon chiefs with retinues of wives, followers and slaves were constantly arriving. They came from all quarters and entered the town by all the roads leading to it. Bakula seemed to be ubiquitous, for he greeted most of the chiefs as they entered the town, and led them to where Satu was sitting in state to receive his guests. Those of humble origin knelt before Satu and paid homage to him; those of exalted position received homage from

¹ See note 10, p. 345.

² See note 11, p. 345.

him; and those who were his equals sat down on a mat, and solemnly, they and Satu, clapped their hands at each other.

Every chief, head man, and invited guest brought a gift of cloth "to wind round the corpse," and as soon as the salutations were over the cloth was presented, piece by piece, to Satu. The present was supposed to be in proportion to the giver's social position. A chief who on account of his importance had received two goats with his invitation would be expected to give three times the value of the goats in cloth, and if he fell short of this he was considered mean; but if he went beyond it he was regarded as a generous, wealthy man, and his name would be in the mouths of all the mourners, and he could strut about puffed out with pride.

This cloth, though given ostensibly "to wind round the dead chief," was really used to defray the expenses of the feast; and happy was the family which had no crushing debt left at the close of such festivities. Satu carefully noted the value of every gift, and although he could not write, yet at the close of the day he could have told from his well-trained memory the number and quality of every piece of cloth given by any chief.

Nearly three hundred people had gathered to the funeral, either by direct invitation, or in

attendance on their husbands, their chiefs, or their masters. It was just at the beginning of the dry season, consequently all the cooking and eating was done in the open streets; and those who could not find a house in which to sleep considered it no hardship to spread their mats and sleep in front of the houses.

Soon after sunset the ordinary folk gathered round the fires watching the women cooking, while the chiefs and head men sat in groups gravely talking local politics or loudly boasting of their prowess in bygone hunts and fights. No cloths were laid for the feast, and no tables were set and decorated. Everything was in primitive style. Their fingers were all the cutlery they possessed, and their loin-cloths were substitutes for serviettes.

Just before the food was served boys and girls went round with calabashes of water, and each guest took a large mouthful, with which he washed his hands, mouth and teeth in the following manner: Having taken a large mouthful of water, the operator ejected some of it from his mouth in a gentle stream on to his hands, which he washed quickly and vigorously. With the remainder of the water he cleaned his teeth by putting the index finger of his right and left hand alternately into his mouth and rubbing them; then,

throwing the residue of the water about in his mouth to rinse it, he spat it out. Lastly, drying his hands on his loin-cloth or on a bark cloth, he completed his toilet preparations for dinner.

It was an amusing sight to see scores of men sitting on their haunches and gravely squirting water on their hands. The puffed cheeks, filled with water; the intent looks, and the care shown to aim the jets of water straight so as not to waste any, made a humorous picture on my mind. How simple and how effectual was the operation! I found that this habit of washing hands, teeth and mouth not only preceded each principal meal, but was also repeated after the meal, and largely accounts for the beautiful, healthy teeth possessed by the natives.

By now the food was cooked, and the women were turning it out into every kind of receptacle they could find—wooden dishes, tin plates, baskets, saucepans and washhand basins were all requisitioned. The guests broke up into groups of from six to ten persons; and each group received a large vessel of smoking vegetables, and another of steaming meat and gravy.

At once the fingers were dipped in, and he who could bolt his food the quickest got the largest share of what was going.¹ Vessel after vessel was

¹ See note 12, p. 346.

emptied, and stomachs visibly distended in the process; but at last operations became slower and died away in grunts of satisfaction.

I noticed that the men and boys ate by themselves, and the women and girls by themselves. In fact, it was considered beneath his dignity for a man to eat with a woman; and boys of ten would receive their portion from their mothers and go and eat it with the men. As a rule the women had what was left by the men, or what they could successfully hide from them. During meals little or nothing was said, as each diner thought eating was more important than talking.

At the close of the feast the old men sat in groups talking and drinking palm-wine. Now and again voices were raised in angry quarrels; for as wine entered, prudence retreated; grievances and jealousies were remembered, revived and wrangled over again, and some of them had to be forcibly restrained from fighting.

The younger men and women, hearing the drums resounding with their rhythmical beating, went off to dance in the moonlight, and the drinking and dancing continued far into the night; pandemonium reigned, law and order were forgotten, and the stars looked down that night on a town that had changed into a pig-sty.

These orgies lasted three nights. Through the

day the men lounged about, sleeping in the shade; the women did no work, but simply gathered firewood and water for cooking the evening feasts. During the day no regular meals were taken, but the folk ate bananas, or roasted plantain, or a few peanuts, or stayed their hunger on sugar-canes—all, by fasting, were preparing for the night's feasting.

On the evening of the fourth day, just at sunset, the corpse was carried to the grave for burial. The bearers took it first round the town, and pretended that the corpse was reluctant to leave the town so they had to struggle with it to the burial place, and there they buried it with its feet to the setting sun, and its head towards the east.

As the corpse was carried by the houses of the principal men they came out to greet it, and fire their guns in a parting salute to their late chief; and after that farewell from the town the funeral guns were loaded and fired in quick succession to inform the spirits in the great, mysterious forest town that an important man was coming.

The Lower Congo natives always buried at sunset for this reason: During the daytime their own towns are deserted, because the women and girls go to the farms and do not return until the afternoon; and the men and boys go to hunt or

fish, or work in the forest, or trade on the markets, and do not return until the evening. Hence the old, the sick and the children only are left in the town; consequently any one arriving during that time would find few, if any, to greet them; but if the traveller reaches a town between five and six o'clock the folk will have returned from their various occupations, and at every step he will be greeted by the people. They think that the great forest town of spirits is conducted in the same way, and to ensure a welcome to the deceased they bury him just before sunset with much firing of guns, blowing of ivory trumpets, and beating of their drums.

Just as the burial rites were completed a white man, a State officer, arrived. He was greeted, and a house was cleared out, swept and given to him for the night. The white man walked freely about the town that evening and enjoyed the hospitality of the people. He watched the dances, listened to the native band composed of ivory trumpets and various drums, and was free to go and come as he pleased. In the morning he repaid their hospitality by demanding the ivory trumpets from them.

This unreasonable request the natives refused to obey; a fracas ensued followed by a scuffle, during which the officer was securely tied.

One party of the natives wanted to kill him and pour his blood on the grave of their buried chief; but another, and stronger, party resisted this extremity, wishing only to punish him for trying to enforce an unjust demand. Finally it was decided to shave the man's head, beard, moustache and eyebrows and send him off.

When the officer's head and face had been reduced to the smoothness of a billiard ball—native shaving is not a gentle process—he was allowed to proceed on his way a sadder, and, perhaps, a wiser man. I heard that ever after that encounter with the natives he heartily and thoroughly abused them to his compatriots, but he carefully left out of the account his attempt to steal their ivory trumpets.

The Congos have a proverb that runs thus: In a court of fowls the cockroach never wins his case; *i. e.* the verdict of one race against another is to be received with caution.

Chapter VI

Our Town Life

Streets are irregular—Houses small and draughty—Their reception, dining, and drawing rooms are in the open air—Their many charms and fetishes—Routine of the day—Bakula tells a story : “How the Sparrow set the Elephant and the Crocodile to pull against each other”—Tumbu, a slave, relates the tale of “The Four Fools”—And Bakula tells : “How the Squirrel won a Verdict for the Gazelle.”

AS soon as the funeral festivities were over, our many visitors returned to their towns and villages, and I soon became interested in the normal life of the natives. Our town was not very large, and its houses were not in regular streets. A person would build to suit his own convenience, and in walking from one side of the town to the other you were obliged to wind in and out among the houses. As a rule there was plenty of space between the huts, but here and there they were crowded together and surrounded by grass fences. These enclosed places belonged to the chief and his head men.

The houses were built with grass walls and roofs, all the work being very neatly done. When new they were rain-proof, but very draughty.

The walls were only four feet six inches high, and the ridge-pole was about seven feet above the ground. The people cooked their food, ate it, and sat outside their houses. In the open air they held their receptions, their social meetings, their palavers, their courts of justice, and every other town and domestic function. The houses were simply for sleeping, for storing their goods, and for sitting in on cold, windy, stormy days. There was no privacy about the native manner of living, but everybody knew everything about everybody else, and a little more besides.

A great number of charms and fetishes were to be found in the town, and it seemed as though they had a charm for every imaginable circumstance of life. One man possessed a charm to protect his goods, and another had a charm to help him steal successfully; one owned a charm to bring him good luck in trading, and another wore a charm to aid him in cheating on the markets the folk with whom he traded. One man whom I saw had a charm to render him invisible that he might, unseen, hear conversations, and enter forbidden places to his own advantage; and many had bought charms to keep evil spirits from jumping down their throats.

My owner, Bakula, wore many charms about his person. One maintained him in good health,

another helped him in hunting, a third made him a favourite with the women and girls, and a fourth brought him good luck in his trading transactions with the other folk in the town. On the appearance of every new moon, Bakula would at sunset catch a chicken, and, cutting its toe, drop a little blood on each of his charms to keep them in good humour, or otherwise they would not act on his behalf.

Every morning soon after sunrise the women and girls went to work on the farms, carrying with them their hoes, baskets and babies; and then the men and boys went to the bush and forests to hunt for game, to tap the palm-trees for wine, or to gather materials for house building and repairing. Others went to the markets with their pigs, goats, fowls, saucepans, native woven cloth, or any other article they had for sale, or desired to exchange for some needed goods.

Towards the middle of the afternoon the women and girls returned laden with food, firewood and water, and at once set about the preparations for the evening meal—the principal one of the day. Then later came the men and boys firing guns in their jubilation, if they had been successful in the hunt, and the female population would rush out shouting vociferously their congratulations to the hunters, and passing remarks on the

bush pig or antelope being carried into the town ignominiously on a pole between two or more bearers. The other men arrived from the markets with the results of the day's trading, or from the forests with the building materials they had collected.

At five o'clock the inhabitants would all be back, and the town would be very lively—the children laughing and playing at their various games; the men lounging about reciting, with more or less boasting inaccuracy, their doings during the day, and awaiting with keen appetites the evening meal. Over all the noises of the village would be heard the angry voices of the women quarrelling; but as such disturbances were of daily occurrence among the women, very few took any notice of them, except to put in an occasional word to incite the women to greater efforts with their tongues.

Soon after sundown the food was ready, and the women turning it out into baskets and wooden platters, carried it to their husbands, hiding a portion for themselves. If you, my reader, had walked through the town then you would have seen the head of each family, together with his sons, male visitors, and friends, sitting around the vessels containing their food, helping themselves with their fingers, their hands and mouths having

already been washed. At some little distance the women and girls would be eating their portions, for they were regarded as inferior creatures, entirely unfit to eat with the men, so they ate in a half-shamefaced, apologetic fashion out of sight of their lords and masters.

As you stood looking at them one of the boys would ask you to have a piece of his pudding, and if you accepted the invitation and took a piece you would find it stick to your teeth like toffee.

"Ah!" the lad would laughingly say, "that is not the way to eat our pudding (*luku*).¹ This is the proper way." And he would pull off a piece, roll it in his fingers, dip it in some soup, and opening his mouth let it roll down his throat without any chewing; afterwards remarking, with a twinkle in his eye: "You white boys may be very clever, but you certainly do not know how to eat pudding."

It was quite dark by the time the meal was finished, and the numerous fires flared and flickered before the houses, lending an air of cheerfulness to the scene. The elders gathered around the fire in front of the chief's house, and discussed the politics of the day with much earnestness and eloquence. The lads were allowed to stand silently around, listening; and

¹ See note 13, p. 346.

while my owner, Bakula, was there, a pompous man made a long, wearisome speech, in which he showed that he thought more of himself than his hearers thought of him.

The speech was full of bombastic platitudes and boastful words, so the chief at last pointed at him, saying: "Here is a little fowl trying to lay a big egg." Such was the effect of this proverb that the pompous man collapsed, whilst his audience chuckled and shook their sides with laughter. And amid the laughter Bakula ran off, and we soon joined a group of young folk who were telling stories round the fire.

Bakula was received with shouts of delight, for he was a merry lad, and appeared to have among them the reputation for telling good stories. Hence he was soon called upon for one, and in a lively, pleasant manner, and with much dramatic force, he gave them the following account of

"How the Sparrow set the Elephant and the Crocodile to pull against each other."

"While the elephant was searching for food one day he happened to pass near a sparrow's nest, and accidentally knocking against the branch, nearly threw the eggs to the ground. The sparrow thereupon said to the elephant—

"You walk very proudly, and not looking

where you are going, you nearly upset my nest. If you come this way again I will tie you up.'

" 'Truly you are a little bird,' the elephant laughingly replied, 'and are you able to tie up me — an elephant?' 'Indeed,' the sparrow answered him, 'if you come this way to-morrow, I will bind you.'

" 'All right,' said the elephant, 'I will now pass on, and will come back here to-morrow to look upon the strength of a sparrow.' So the elephant went his way and the sparrow flew off to bathe in a neighbouring river.

" On reaching the river and finding a crocodile asleep at her favourite bathing-place, the sparrow said: 'Wake up! this is my bathing-place, and if you come here again I will tie you up.'

" 'Can a little sparrow like you tie up a crocodile?' the crocodile asked her.

" 'It is true what I tell you,' retorted the sparrow, 'and if you return here to-morrow I will fasten you up.'

" 'Very well,' replied the crocodile, 'I will come to-morrow to see what you can do.' And with that the crocodile floated away, and the sparrow returned to her nest.

" The next day the sparrow, seeing the elephant coming, said to him: 'Yesterday I told you not

to come this way again, because you endangered my nest. Now I will tie you, as I warned you.'

"'All right,' said the elephant, 'I want to see what a little thing like you can do.'

"The sparrow then brought a strong vine rope, put it round the neck of the elephant, and said to him: 'Wait a moment while I go and have a drink of water, and then you will see how strong I am.' To which the elephant replied: 'Go and drink plenty of water, for to-day I want to see what a sparrow can do.' So the sparrow went and found the crocodile basking in the sun on the river's bank.

"'Oh! you are here again,' she said, 'I will tie you up as I warned you yesterday, because you do not listen to what you are told.' 'Very well,' sneered the crocodile, 'come and tie me up and I will see what strength you have.'

"The sparrow took the end of the rope and tied it round the crocodile, and said: 'Wait a moment, I will go a little higher up the hill and pull.' So away she flew up the hill on to a tree, and from there she called out: 'Pull elephant, pull crocodile. It is I, the sparrow.' So the elephant pulled and the crocodile pulled, and each thought he was pulling against the sparrow; not knowing they were pulling against each other. All the day long they pulled, until the evening,

but neither out-pulled the other. And during the whole day the sparrow was crying out: 'Pull, elephant, you have the strength; pull harder, elephant.' And in the same way she addressed the crocodile.

"At last the crocodile said: 'Friend sparrow, I cannot pull any more, come and unfasten me, and I will never come to your bathing-place again.' 'Wait a little while,' said the sparrow, 'I am going up to my village.' And the elephant said, as she drew near: 'Now I know you are very strong. Please come and undo me, and I will never come again to shake your nest.' So the sparrow loosened the elephant and then went and removed the rope from the crocodile's neck; and from that time the sparrow has never been troubled by either the elephant or the crocodile."

At the close of this story there were many comments on the 'cuteness of the sparrow, and some sage remarks. One little fellow said that, although the sparrow was small, she had more wit and sense than either the big crocodile or the bigger elephant. Therefore we should not despise people because they are small.

They begged Bakula to tell them another story; but he said he could not remember another just then. They, however, pleaded with him, and at

last he said: "If Tumbu will now tell one of his stories, I will try and recall one of mine by the time he has finished." Tumbu, who was sitting at the back, was pushed forward to a place in the centre, near the fire; and as the light from the fire fell on him, it revealed a sad face lit with large, intelligent, but pathetic, eyes.

I knew the boy and his sad story. He was a slave who, in a time of famine in his district a few years ago, had been sold by his parents for a few roots of cassava, and he was forced from his mother, his village acquaintances, and brought to this strange town. The boys and girls twitted him with being a slave, and to make matters worse they taunted him with the miserable price that had been paid for him.

His sensitive spirit brooded in his loneliness over the insults poured upon him, and the marks of his deep sorrows were seen on his sad face. He shrank from the gaze of the many eyes that were now fixed upon him; but Bakula had been kind to him, and had often defended him, and he was ready to bear anything for his hero. Therefore in a glad, shy manner he related the following adventure, called

"The Story of the Four Fools."

"A wizard out walking one day met a boy

crying bitterly. He asked him the reason of his tears, and the boy said : ' I have lost my father's parrot, and if you can find it I will pay you well.' So the wizard called a hunter, a carpenter, and a thief, and told them about the loss and the reward, and they decided to search for the parrot.

" ' Before starting let us show our skill,' said one of the four. ' You, thief, go and steal an egg from that fowl without its knowledge.' The thief went and stole the egg, and the fowl did not move. The hunter put up the egg as a mark, went a long distance off and proved his skill by hitting the egg. After which the carpenter showed his cleverness by putting the egg together again. Then they turned to the wizard for him to give a proof of his smartness, and after a little time he said : ' The parrot has been stolen by the people in that vessel.'

" All four entered their glass ship¹ and after a time caught up to the vessel. The thief went on board, and waved his charm, then he took the parrot, laid the table, and had a good feast; and when he had finished eating he picked up the parrot and returned to his glass ship.

" When the people in the vessel found the parrot gone, they gave chase to the glass ship. The captain of the vessel sent down the rain and

¹ See note 14, p. 346.

it broke the glass ship, but the carpenter mended it, and the hunter fired at the rain and killed it. The captain sent the lightning and it broke the ship, but the carpenter mended it again, and the hunter fired at the lightning and killed it. So they eventually reached the land and took the parrot to the chief's son, and said: 'Here is your father's parrot.'

"The lad was so glad to receive it that he told them to select what they liked from his wealth, 'even to the wonderful fowl which lays beads, or anything else you desire.'¹ They chose the fowl and went their way, but they had not gone very far before the wizard said: 'It is my fowl, for I told you where the parrot was.' The thief said: 'No, it is mine, for I stole the parrot from the vessel.' And the carpenter also claimed it, as he had twice mended the broken ship. Moreover, the hunter said: 'Of course it is mine, for I killed the rain and the lightning.' Thus they argued long and angrily, and as they could not agree, they at last did a thing that was amazingly stupid. They killed the wonderful fowl, and divided it into four pieces, each taking his share. Now who out of these four foolish ones should have had the fowl?"

¹ See note 15, p. 346.

This story excited a great amount of discussion. Some argued that this one should have had the fowl, and others argued with much gesticulation that another should have taken the fowl. Each character had his supporters; but all agreed that they were four fools not to let the fowl lay plenty of beads and share them.

Bakula was now asked again to give his promised story; and he told them—

“How the Squirrel won a Verdict for the Gazelle.”

“When the leopard and the gazelle were living in the same town each of them bought a goat—the leopard a male and the gazelle a female. One night the gazelle’s goat gave birth to two kids, and the leopard, being very greedy, went and stole the two kids from the gazelle’s goat and put them with his own goat.

“In the morning the leopard called the gazelle and said to him: ‘My goat has given birth to two kids.’ The gazelle was very much surprised at hearing this, as male goats do not have kids, and he told the leopard so; but the leopard said: ‘All right, you don’t believe me. We will call the judges and hear what they say.’ So they carried the case to the court of animals, who acted as judges, and they said: ‘The kids belong to the

leopard's goat.' For they were very much afraid of the leopard, and thought that if they gave the verdict against him he would kill them.

"The gazelle went and told the squirrel all his troubles and how he was cheated out of his kids. 'To-morrow morning,' said the squirrel, 'put a rope across your town for me to run on.' So the next morning the gazelle put a rope right by the leopard's house and courtyard, which were full of the folk who had judged the case in favour of the leopard. And by and by the squirrel came running along the rope at a great rate.

"'Where are you going so quickly,' asked the leopard, 'that you cannot rest a little?' 'I am in a hurry to fetch my mother,' said the squirrel, 'for my father has just given birth to twins.'

"'Ah! ah!' laughed the leopard; 'can a man give birth to a child?'

"'Can a male goat give birth to kids?' retorted the squirrel. Whereat the leopard was so angry and felt so much ashamed of himself, that he went right away from the town and never returned, for fear of the animals laughing at him. And the gazelle carried the kids back to his own goat."

When this story ended appreciative remarks were made on the wit of the squirrel, and contempt was poured on the clumsy leopard who so

foolishly threw away the verdict given in his favour.

By this time the moon, full and beautiful, was riding high in the sky, flooding the village with its soft, silvery light, so Bakula proposed a dance.

Up jumped the boys and girls from the different fires; drums were carried out to an open space, seed rattles were tied round the ankles and wrists of some of the dancers, and very soon the rhythmic tap, tap of the drums were heard and answered by the clap, clap of the dancers' hands as they formed two lines—one of girls, and the other of lads, and began a dance that only ended in the early morning, and when the performers were thoroughly exhausted with their exertions.

Chapter VII

The Search for the Witch

People believe their chief died by witchcraft—They send for the witch-finder—His arrival and antics—The ceremony of discovering the witch—Satu's brother, Mavakala, is accused—Why was Mavakala accused?—He takes the ordeal—Proves his innocence—Other tests are forced on him—He is done to death.

DURING the illness of the deceased chief there was a widespread feeling in the town that some one was bewitching him, and that therefore the "medicine men" were unable to cure him. At last one of their wizards stated plainly that a witch was at work destroying their best efforts; and although they tried charms to ward off, and threats to frighten, the witch from pursuing his (or her) wicked purpose, yet their patient continued to grow worse, and at last died. And now that their chief was buried the people demanded that a proper witch-finder should be engaged to seek out the witch.

A great witch-finder was called from a distant town, and on his arrival I noticed that he was a small, active man with keen piercing eyes that seemed to jump from face to face and read the very thoughts of those who stood around.

He was dressed in the soft skins of monkeys and bush-cats; around his neck was a necklace of rats' teeth mixed with the teeth of crocodiles and leopards. His body was decorated with pigments of different colours; thick circles of white surrounded the eyes, a patch of red ran across the forehead, broad stripes of yellow chased each other down the cheeks, bands of red and yellow went up the arms and across the chest, and spots of blue promiscuously filled in the vacant spaces. At the different points of his curious dress were bells that tinkled at every movement. The boys looked at him in deep awe, the girls and women cowered away from him, and the men, though they feared him, greeted him with a simulated friendliness that ill-accommodated with their nervousness.

The witch-finder (or *Ngang' a Ngombo*) was supposed to find his own way to the town and home of his client; for how could they believe in a man's occult power to discover a witch if he had not the ability to walk straight, without being shown, to the house of his employer.

To meet this difficulty the witch-finder had one or two apprentices, among whose duties it was to question cautiously the messenger, and to obtain from him all the needed information about the town, house, circumstances attending the death of

the person, and the relations of the townspeople to one another. If the messenger would not, or could not, give the required knowledge, then the assistant accompanied him back to his town, and, as he went, he dropped at the cross-roads twigs or leaves to guide his master—the witch-finder—right up to the house of his client.

The assistant ferreted out the quarrels of the family employing his master, and their animosities towards each other, or towards one of their number. In every family there is to be found at least one who is the object of the suspicion, jealousy or hatred of the family—the unpopular member; and all the information thus gathered is secretly told to the witch-finder and the disliked person pointed out to him.

On the appointed day a great crowd gathered. No member of the clan was absent, except those on trading expeditions. The assembled people formed a great circle, into the middle of which the witch-finder danced and chanted to the beat of the drums. It was a hot day and the sun poured down its scorching rays on the performer, making him perspire so profusely that the various colours on his face and body ran into each other, adding grotesqueness to his ugliness.

As he pranced and danced up and down the circle he put question after question, and was

answered by the people with *ndungu*,¹ or *otuama*,² as he guessed wrongly or rightly about the dead man's ways.

Presently he elicited the fact that the deceased had had a very bad quarrel with some one, and then he discovered that it was with a man in the town. By crafty questions the witch-doctor narrowed the circle of examination, the people, all excitement, really helping him though quite unaware that they did so; and at last, in a fandango of whirling skins and rotating arms and legs, he brought himself to a standstill in front of one of the men, and accused him of being the person who had bewitched the late chief to death.

It was the unpopular man, Satu's brother, who was thus publicly declared the witch, and the whole crowd was astonished that they had never thought of him before as the monster who used witchcraft to do his own brother to death.

Immediately on the declaration there was a tremendous hubbub of voices; insults were heaped on the accused, he was jostled about, weapons were raised threateningly, and each tried to outvie his neighbour in abusing the denounced man as a proof of his own guiltlessness.

Amidst the *mêlée* the accused protested his own innocence, and demanding to take the ordeal,

¹ See note 16, p. 347.

² See note 17, p. 347.

he ran for his gun ¹ to shoot the witch-finder who had, by his false accusation, brought all this trouble on him. But the crafty *nganga* had received his large fee, and was already well on his way back to his own town. None doubted the *bona fides* of the *nganga* except Mavakala, the accused man; and how could he prove his guiltlessness except by voluntarily taking the ordeal.

What had Mavakala done to draw such an accusation upon himself? On his brother's death he had cried as long and as loudly as any of them; he had neglected his person, worn old clothes, dressed his hair in mourning fashion, gone unwashed, and had carefully observed all the usual ceremonies of "crying" for a near relative, and yet they charged him with bewitching his brother to death. Yes, all his neighbours recalled these facts, but they interpreted them now in the light of this serious charge. Of course, he had observed all these rites simply to deceive them. He must have thought them fools to be duped by his proofs and protestations. No, he must take the ordeal, and that quickly, and the ordeal-giver must be sent for immediately. The whole of Mavakala's family was alienated from him, for was he not accused of the most heinous crime of which a human being can be guilty—witchcraft?

¹ See note 18, p. 347.

What had Mavakala done to render himself so fatally unpopular? That evening the declaration of the witch-finder was discussed round all the fires, and as Bakula went from group to group I picked up many items of the indictment.

Mavakala was an energetic, successful trader, and from each trading journey he came back the richer for his enterprise. They were jealous of his wealth; but among themselves they whispered that his increased riches were really due to witchcraft and not to his ability; and were not their suspicions justified, for was he not now accused of selling his brother's corpse to the white traders?

I heard, too, that Mavakala was a skilled blacksmith, and had made good knives out of odd pieces of hoop iron taken from old cases, and bought, by him, from traders on the river; and had even made hoes and axes out of old bale iron. Many other clever things he had done, all of which were now by these superstitious people accepted as proofs of his witchcraft. He had awakened their jealousy by his energy and smartness in business; his skill and ingenuity in smithing had aroused their suspicions, and his prosperity had provoked their hatred. In any other country his ability would have been admired and honoured, but on the Congo it was a sign of witchcraft, and always ended in death by the ordeal.

It was then I understood the reason for the backwardness of these people. They destroy their leaders and their best men, and the only hope of the people is deliverance from the curse of the witch-doctors.

The next day the ordeal-giver (or *ngol'a nkasa*) arrived, bringing with him the ordeal bark which he had procured from the *nkasa* tree in the following manner. This tree is supposed to have a spirit; hence, when they are about to cut some of its bark for ordeal purposes, they address it in these words: "I come to take a piece of your bark, and if the man for whom it is intended is a witch, let my machet bend when I strike you; but if he is not a witch, let my machet enter into you, and let the wind stop blowing." The machet had bent under the blow, and the omen being against Mavakala the ordeal-giver made his preparations with smug satisfaction.

Mavakala, accompanied by many of the men and lads of the town, was led to the bare top of a neighbouring hill, where a rough shanty of palm fronds was built. The accused was pushed into this, and told to stretch out his arms, and not to touch anything. The ordeal-giver pushed a stone towards the poor wretch, with twenty-seven pieces of *nkasa* bark on it; and then he ground each

piece of bark and slowly fed Mavakala with the powders.

During the process the accused man vomited three times, and should therefore have been set free and carried back to the town with shouts of honour; but was not the omen against him? and besides, was he not obnoxious to his jealous and superstitious neighbours?

Consequently, when the ordeal-giver proposed that further tests should be applied, there were none to lift up their voices in protest against the injustice of continuing the cruelty.

Mavakala was dazed with the narcotic effects of the drug that had been forced on him, and his wits were dulled and muddled. He was taken with rough hands from the temporary hut and made to stand by himself, a swaying, lonely, pathetic figure—a type of all those who have been persecuted or have laid down their lives for the sole crime of being in the vanguard of their generation.

While Mavakala stood swaying there, six twigs in rapid succession were thrown at his feet, and he as quickly had to name the trees to which they belonged. This he did successfully, and then he was told to name the birds and butterflies that were sailing by. Again he unerringly gave each its proper name; but now, just when he wanted his

eyes to be at their keenest, he could feel them becoming blurred with the dregs of the drug he had been forced to take. His tormentors called on him to name the ants crawling at his feet. He faltered, stammered confusedly, and in stooping, that his poor, hazy eyes might have a better chance to recognize them, he fell, with a moaning cry, to the ground.

In an instant the heartless, superstitious crowd was on him; sticks and machets, knives and guns, soon did their work on the poor mangled body. None was too poor or mean to kick his carcass and spit in his face, and his bruised, gory corpse was left unburied upon the bare hill-top—a feast for the beasts of the forests and the birds of the air.

By and by the stars peeped out, half ashamed to look on a world where such tragedies were enacted, and as they looked they saw that *thing* there upon the bare hill-top. It was covered with wounds, and every wound had a tongue that cried to its God, and to their God: “How long, how long, shall darkness cover the land, and gross darkness the people?”

Chapter VIII

Visitors Arrive

The dulness and pettiness of native life—Arrival of two visitors—Bakula questions them about the white man—They relate the little they know about him—Old Plaited-Beard stirs the people up against the white man—They exchange their views about him—They agree to oppose him—The white man is seen approaching—He is driven from the town and has to sleep in the bush.

THE excitement of the funeral festivities, and of the hunt for and murder of the witch had passed away, leaving a deadly dulness on the town. The men suspiciously snarled at one another, and the women quarrelled with monotonous regularity. Their lives were petty, mean, and there was not enough dignity in a whole village to supply one man. For generations they had lived on a low level, with their eyes, thoughts, and hearts on the ground, and apparently the art of looking into the infinite spaces of God above and around them had been lost in their animalism.

Daily the women went to the farms, or to the markets to barter their produce; and the men went to the forests, to the markets, or to the hunt.

But one evening the town was set agog with

THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL AT NKABA.

the news that a white man was visiting the various villages, and would soon arrive in their town. The men who brought this news had much to tell about the coming visitor, for he had spent two or three days in their village. They were the "lions" of the evening, and their only regret was that they had not larger stomachs to accept comfortably all the invitations to the evening meals that poured in on them.

The visitors had come to transact business with the chief; consequently Satu's fire was the centre that evening of a large and interested gathering. Men and lads crowded near the chief and visitors, while the women and girls hovered about the outskirts of the circle picking up such scraps of information as filtered through to them.

My owner, Bakula, was there, and put the first question, or rather series of questions: Who is this white man? What is he like? Where does he come from? What is he doing in this country? And Bakula stopped not because his curiosity was exhausted, but from sheer lack of breath.

Bakula had put into words what all were longing to know, so they sat quietly, while one of the visitors said: "We don't know who this white man is. He is not one of the traders whom we have seen at Mboma,¹ for he is new to these parts, but

¹ See note 19, p. 347.

he speaks our language very well, though at times he makes stupidly amusing mistakes. His carriers say that he comes from Congo dia Ngunga¹—the king's town away south. He will not sell us things like a trader, for he only barter for food for himself and carriers, and not for ivory or slaves. He offers to give us medicine, but we are afraid to take it, for who knows but it may bewitch us to death. He has invited some of our boys to his school, and has promised to teach them to read and write, and also how to make doors, windows and bricks, like white men. He even promised to clothe and feed them; but we shall not let any of them go. What we cannot understand is this: Why should the white man take all this trouble? Why should he offer to feed and clothe our children, to teach them, and to give us medicine?"

"I know why they do all these things," shouted the old man with the plaited beard. "They want to bewitch you; they desire to take your spirits away, and then they will buy up your bodies and send them to their own country to turn, by their great magic, into slaves. You know what I told you on the road;" and with angry, burning words and vehement gestures he repeated to the whole crowd what he had told the few around the fire

¹ See note 20, p. 347.

the first night I spent among them; and then, with foaming lips and glinting eyes, he cried: "This is the kind of white man against whom I warned you. If he comes here let us kill him."

The women clapped their hands in horror of the wicked white man, and held their children tightly to them, and the men shifted nervously in their seats, and loosened the knives in their belts.

If, at that moment, the white man had walked into the town he would have been murdered, and his mutilated body thrown into the bush.

It was some time before they had so quieted as to continue their interrogations of the visitors. "Well, you have not told us what this white man is like," called a voice from the back of the crowd.

"No, I have not," replied the visitor, "because Tata stopped our talk with his horrible charges against the white men. This man who is coming is a white man, and you have all seen white men. This one is neither short nor tall, he has no beard, but he has tin saucepans to cook his food in, and a funny thing called a frying-pan, which always makes a lot of noise when it is put on the fire. He is a dirty white man, for the two days he was in our village he never washed more than his hands and face, and he smells just like all the other white men."¹ And the speaker and others

¹ See note 21, p. 348.

held their noses with expressions of exaggerated disgust.

"I do not think he is dirty," chimed in one of the listeners. "When I was last at the coast I asked one of the white man's boys if his master was dirty, and he said: 'No, he takes a bath every day in his house.' You see this white man is travelling, and has no bath-house with him, and consequently in front of you he only washes his hands and face."

"Oh, is that it? Perhaps you are right," answered the visitor in an unconvinced voice.

"I will tell you something else," continued the first speaker. "Once when I was at the coast I was talking to one of the interpreters there about this very matter—the smell emitted by white men; and he said: 'They give off a bad odour, I know, but one day I heard one of the white traders say: "Those wretched niggers do stink badly!"' So after all it may be that we smell as badly to them as they do to us, therefore we must not complain."

The man with the plaited beard eyed the speaker for a few moments in angry contempt, and then he burst out at him in such a tirade that I feared his words would choke him.

"You dog," he cried, "you witch, are you in the pay of the white man that you should thus

“speak for him? You white man,¹ you bewitched our chief to death; not Mavakala, I always said he was innocent and he vomited the ordeal three times, yet they would kill him; but you are the witch; you sold our chief’s spirit to these cursed white men, and now he is slaving for them, and we shall all die through your witchcraft and greed.”

By the time the old man had finished his invectives the two chief actors in this scene were standing by themselves in a circle of anxious, terror-stricken faces. They were types of the old order and the new—the old order, slaves to witch-doctors, charms and superstitions that demanded the continuance of things as they are; the new order, men and lads upon whose minds new ideas were dawning and struggling for the mastery against their crude, superstitious fears,—men who were yearning for they knew not what, and were restless through strange strivings in their hearts.

There, flooded by the glorious, soft moonlight, stood the two men glaring at each other. Murder was in their hearts, and their hands were on their knives. A few moments more and the pent-up feelings of the surging crowd would have burst their strained barriers and much blood would have been shed, for each had his adherents, when Satu, the chief, stepped between the two men.

¹ See note 22, p. 348.

He was still dressed in mourning for his brother, and the thick coating of oil and soot on his face—a sign of his sorrow, had not yet been removed. He was a superstitious man and much travelled, a man in whose soul what-he-had-seen was struggling with his ignorant, superstitious fears.

In a few calm words he poured oil on the turbulent passions of his people. He scouted the idea that because a man related what he had seen and heard that therefore he was a witch; and he soothed the old man by promising to oppose the white man.

There was no more talk that night about the coming white man, for very soon after Satu uttered the above diplomatic words the people separated, and went either to whisper their fears to each other around their own fires, or to spread their mats for sleep. Several times during that night women woke from horrid dreams, screaming that the white man had stolen their children, or was trying to throttle the souls out of them.¹ In the morning as the women went to the farms they related to each other the dreams of the previous night, but instead of regarding them as nightmares caused by the exciting events of the preceding evening, they were taken as undeniable

¹ See note 23, p. 348.

proofs of the devilish designs of the white men to carry out the awful predictions of the old man with the plaited beard.

A few evenings after these happenings the much-talked-about *Mundele wa Nzambi* (or white man of God) was seen descending the hill on the other side of our valley. The women, screaming, snatched up their children and fled; the men beat some loud sounding notes of alarm on the drums; and then, picking up their guns, machets, knives, sticks, and any weapon to hand, went hurriedly to bar the entrance to their town. We saw the white man hesitate, stand still a moment, and then come on slowly and deliberately. He evidently knew the meaning of those excited thuds on the drum and the screams of the women.

Bakula, with a heavy stick in his hand—how he longed to have a gun so as to have a shot at those cruel white men!—ran with the men to the road by which the white man must come. As we hurried forward we could hear the men discussing what was to be done. Some were for killing the white man at once, but the majority said: "No, we will hear what he has to say. We will smell out his wickedness first, and then if there is cause we will help you to kill him." Satu said: "We will neither hear him, nor kill him; but send him back the way he has come."

The white man was now mounting the hill. It was a narrow, difficult, rough track that led to our town. He was panting by reason of the steepness of the ascent; and seemed utterly wearied with his long journey. He saw the ugly demonstration in front of him; he heard the yells and screams of rage and defiance; but he came quietly on—a lonely man to a surging torrent of wild, uncontrollable passions. His carriers and boys hung back, for they were overawed by the threatening aspect of the crowd.

As he drew near the white man held out his hand as a sign of his friendship; but Bakula, filled with the terrible stories he had heard about white men, struck at the proffered hand, and missed it in his blind rage.

Then arose a babble of curses, contradictory shouts, and threats to kill him if he did not go back. They hustled him about like a battledore. They tore his clothes; but he was so mixed up with them that they could neither use guns nor machets without great risks to their friends, and he was not worth that. When their fury had somewhat spent itself, the undaunted white man calmly asked them for permission to sleep in their town.

“No, we don’t want you,” the people screamed.

“I have only come to do you good,” he said.

"No, you have not, you have come to bewitch us to death," they shouted.

"If I wanted to bewitch you to death I should have brought guns and soldiers, but you see I have neither. I want to speak to you about the great and good God Who sent His Son into the world to tell you of His love, and to save you," was his quiet reply.

"You are a cunning, crafty witch. We want neither you, nor your goodness, nor your talk about God, therefore go away," they cried.

"It is nearly dark, and the next town is a long, long way, and my people and I are very tired. Let me sleep here outside your town!" he pleaded.

"No, not here," they said. "It is too close to us; go and sleep by the stream in the forest."

"It is cold and damp there, and plenty of fever and mosquitoes are in that place. Let us sleep here, we shall not harm you!" he smilingly said.

"No, not here. Down there is good enough for a witch. Keep the fevers and mosquitoes away with your magic," they sneeringly retorted.

Sadly and wearily the white man retraced his steps, and as he went down the hill he called his carriers and boys, and that night they put up some waterproof sheets to serve as a tent to protect them from the heavy dews and dripping trees.

Well, it might have been worse, and through his God-given calmness the white man had come out of a very difficult and dangerous position with only a few rents in his clothes and a few bruises on his body. We heard many things about the white man next morning when his boys came up to the town to buy some food from the people.

All through that night the natives in the town danced around their fetishes to keep them alert in protecting them from the white man's devilry: drums were beaten and gongs sounded to frighten the evil spirits away; and guns were occasionally fired to warn off witches, and the lonely white man down in his camp, as he heard the various sounds, prayed: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do," and especially did he pray for the lad who struck at his outstretched hand.

Chapter IX

Some Customs, Games, and a Journey

The luck-giver is called to bring prosperity on the town—His mode of procedure—Satu and some of his people go on a visit to a great chief—Good and bad omens—The game at "Antelope"—Bakula narrates a story: "How the Fox saved the Frog's Life"—Another lad tells why inquiry should come before anger—The difficult road—Bakula and his friends dress themselves—Their mixed wardrobes.

SATU, the chief, wished to have a healthy and prosperous town, and his people were one with him in this laudable desire. Now the only way they knew of obtaining their object was to send for the luck-giver (or, *ngang'a zumbi*), who possessed a bag of charms consisting of pieces of the skins of various animals and reptiles, bits of herbs, and powders concocted of indescribable messes. These were supposed, when properly used, to impart good health to a town, good luck in breeding animals, and prosperity in trade. The people clubbed their moneys together, for, as all were to share in the good fortune to be conferred by the charm, all were expected to give towards its expenses; and as the benefits would be large the cost would also be proportionately great.

I had observed that people who owned little fetishes and expected small benefits only from them made small offerings to them, such as a little blood from the foot of a frog, or from the toe of a chicken that cost them nothing. Those who wanted larger boons killed fowls and poured their blood over their fetishes; and those who wished for greater advantages sacrificed goats every month—their expectations were in proportion to their sacrifices.

The fee having been collected, the luck-giver was called. He was a wizen-faced, withered man with small, crafty, shiftless eyes. His appearance seemed to belie his cornucopian office; but, perhaps, he could give to others the good fortune that he had apparently failed to procure for himself.

On his arrival he very carefully selected a hard wood log and cut a hole in it, and into this hole he put bits of all the articles from his bag so as to make the log an effective charm. A hole was dug in the ground on the outskirts of the town by the side of the road along which the women passed when fetching water from the stream. A goat was then killed and the head put in the hole, and the fetish stick erected on it—this was supposed to preserve the post from the attacks of the white ants,—and then the blood from the slain

goat was poured over the charms in the post; and over the hole containing the charms was tied a piece of palm-tree gossamer, which also was drenched with the goat's blood. Earth was rammed round the stick, and the fetish was now completed, and ready to work.

But there was one prohibition that the luck-giver said must be scrupulously observed: nothing tied in a bundle could be brought into the town, or the charm would become ineffective, and its luck-giving power destroyed. Women returning with firewood must untie their bundles before reaching the fetish; men with bundles of thatching-grass must take off the bands; carriers with loads must either loosen all the cords, or make a wide detour to avoid the town; and the people must remove their girdles and belts.

This was a very cunning prohibition, for, if the town had good health, the animals bred well, and the trade prospered, then the luck-giver received all the credit for making such a wonderful charm; but if no good results followed the expense and trouble of setting up such a costly fetish, then some one had broken the taboo and nullified the luck-giving properties of the fetish post.

As the luck-giver was there Satu and some of the head men thought they would invest in

72 Some Customs, Games, and a Journey

a luck charm for their own private use. My owner, Bakula, longed to speculate in one, and he counted his little store of savings, but found that he had not near enough for the fee, etc.

The necessary arrangements having been made and the fee paid, Satu and the head men selected strong, young cocks and carried them to the luck-giver, who took out of his bag of charms a small portion of each and pounded them carefully into a well-mixed paste, and a little of this "medicine" he gave to each cock, and thereupon they became the very embodiment of luck and all kinds of good fortune to their happy owners.

As only rich men could afford such luxuries as these expensive charms the superstitions respecting their wealth-giving powers were fostered and maintained. From that time these fowls were treated as fetishes. No one was permitted to beat or hurt a luck fowl (or *nsusu a zumbi*). It was respected like a chief, and strutted about the town crowing aggressively, as though it were fully cognizant of its own importance.

This fetish fowl was supposed to tell its owner of coming events as danger to the town or to himself. By its crow it predicted the future, and, as only the owner was able to rightly interpret the

crow, he had therefore exclusive information which he could use for his own advantage. I found afterward that when these fowls grow old they are killed and eaten only by their owners, and the charm is given to other fowls; and sometimes the charm is put into a billy-goat or into a male pig, and they are then treated with respect like the fetish fowls, and tell their masters by their bleatings and gruntings of future events.

One day Satu told his people that he was going in eight days to visit the great chief of a distant town, and he asked some of his people to go with him. He had fourteen wives, but he promised to take only six of them. He reckoned to be absent about a fortnight, or, as they put it, four *nkandu*,¹ i. e. sixteen days. Great preparations were made for this visit of ceremony. All who owned bits of finery brought them out of their hiding-places and furbished them anew. Cassava roots were dried, peanuts were shelled, and as the day of departure drew near *kwanga*² bread was made ready for the journey. Messengers had been sent to inform the chief of the coming visit, and had returned with greetings and words of welcome.

The day at last dawned on which Satu was to

¹ See Chapter XVIII, on native markets, p. 223.

² See note II, p. 345.

pay his important visit to a brother chief. Bakula, with a bundle of Satu's best cloths, cosmetics and trinkets, led the way; then came some ordinary town-folk carrying sleeping-mats, food for the journey, small bottles of palm-oil, and cakes of camwood powder. Following these was our town band, consisting of five ivory trumpets and three drums. Whenever we drew near to a village or town our band played to notify the folk that some great men were coming. Behind the band came Satu with his six wives, other head men followed with contingents of wives from their harems, and Old Plaited-Beard brought up the rear with three of his wives.

We had not gone very far when a snake darted out of the grass on one side of the road, but instead of crossing the path, it turned up towards the oncoming party. Bakula, terrified at the evil omen, called a halt and sent word along the line to ask Satu what was to be done.

While Satu was hesitating Old Plaited-Beard came up, and as soon as he heard of the ill omen he insisted that the whole party should return and start the journey over again. Many protested at this foolishness, but others, swayed by superstitious fears, agreed that the only wise course was to return at once.

Fortunately we were not far from our town, and

before the sun was very high we were back at the starting-point, where we rested for a short time, and received the condolences of those left in the town.

If the snake had only turned the other way it would have been an augury of good luck. Bakula, directly he saw it coming out of the grass, should have shouted, and then the snake would have directed its course the opposite way. He might have turned, by prompt action, an ill omen into a good augury, and we should have been saved all this trouble.

After a rest we again started, and as a bird flew along the path in the direction in which we were going everybody began to laugh and crack jokes, for this omen of the bird was entirely in our favour.

About the middle of the afternoon we reached a village, where we decided to spend the night. The chief of this village, being a man of no family, paid homage to Satu, and gave him and the other head men houses for the night, but the ordinary members of the party slept in the open. Satu also received from the chief presents of different kinds of food, as bunches of plantain, baskets of cassava flour, a few fowls, and two demijohns of palm-wine, which was fizzing loudly with fermentation and was strong enough to make

76 Some Customs, Games, and a Journey

them drunk, only fortunately there was not enough of it.

While we were resting I noticed the youngsters in this village played an amusing game called "Antelope," and they did it in the following manner: All the players but one ran about on all-fours with their faces upwards, one person alone being allowed to stand up, and he was called the "antelope," and the others were called the "hunters." They scuttled about in this ridiculous attitude, and each tried to touch, or kick the "antelope" with his foot.

A large court had been marked out on the ground, and the "antelope" was not allowed to go outside it, and the "hunters" tried to hem him in a corner; but when the "antelope," to avoid being touched, ran out of court all the "hunters" got on their feet and chased him, and he who first pretended to cut him up with a knife became the "antelope."

A general *mêlée* usually ensued, for every one pretended to cut him up with shouts of "a leg for me," "head for me," "some flesh for me." The game excited much laughter, and all seemed to enjoy it thoroughly.

After the evening meal was over, and the men had lit their pipes and gone to hold high converse on politics, woman, and sundry other important

matters, Bakula was called upon by the young men of the party to tell a story or two before they rolled themselves in their mats for the night.

Nothing loth, he told, with all his usual grace and sprightliness, the following story, perhaps suggested by the fact that they themselves were on a journey. He called it—

“How the Fox saved the Frog.”

“A Frog, having built a nice town, received a visit from several well-dressed young men. The Frog welcomed them, and they very civilly answered his greetings. The Frog asked them where they were going, and they replied: ‘We are not going anywhere in particular; we are just walking about visiting the towns.’ The Frog called out his thirty wives to come and pay their respects to the visitors, and they came out of their houses and greeted the young men.

“The wives asked their husband how he came to know them, and he replied: ‘I do not know them, but seeing them well dressed I saluted them.’

“‘Oh! you welcomed them because they are well dressed,’ they retorted; ‘yet ever since we married you we have never received any new cloths from you.’¹

¹ It is the custom for a man to give his wife at least one new cloth every year.

“‘Never mind,’ he said, ‘I am well known as a great chief who has built a whole town and married thirty wives.’

“‘Oh yes,’ they answered, ‘you are well known; but we work and farm, and have no cloths, only rags, hence you don’t respect us like those who are well dressed.’ The Frog was dumb.

“The Frog asked the young men where and how he could buy some cloth, and they told him that if he carried some peanuts to Mboma¹ he could buy plenty there, and the road was not difficult to find, for if he followed the river he would reach there in a few days. The Frog was glad to hear this, and thereupon he killed six fowls and made a feast for his friends, and told each of his wives to bring him a large basket of peanuts in the morning, for he said: ‘Altho’ I am a big chief of a large town I feel ashamed, because my wives have had no new cloths since I married them, and they do not dress properly.’

“The next morning the peanuts were brought and tied into a load, and for the journey some food was prepared, and the Frog started, telling his wives that he would be back in twenty days.

“On the third day of his journey the Frog reached a large baobab-tree that had fallen across

¹ See note 19, p. 347.

the road, and while he was considering how he, a person with such short legs, could jump over it, he heard a voice say : ' If you are a strong man please put down your bundle and save me, for as I was on my way to visit my wife's family this tree fell on me and has held me here for twenty months. Have pity on me and help me now from under this tree.'

" When the Frog heard this, he at once put down his load and went under the tree, and swelled and swelled until he lifted it and the Snake was able to crawl out; then the Frog let the tree down again, and went to pick up his load to continue his journey. The Snake, however, immediately caught him by the leg, and told him to get ready to be swallowed.

" The Frog said : ' What have I done that you should swallow me, for although I had a right to be paid for helping you, yet I did not ask for anything ! Let me go on my way to Mboma.'

" While they were arguing about this an Antelope arrived, and he was asked to judge between them; but when he had heard the whole matter he was afraid to settle the affair properly, for he said to himself : ' If I let the Frog go, who is right, but little, then the Snake will kill me.' So the Antelope gave the verdict in favour of the Snake.

" The Snake quickly said : ' Do you hear that?

80 Some Customs, Games, and a Journey

Get ready at once and I will swallow you.' But the Frog cried: 'He would have given me the verdict only he is afraid of you.'

"While they were discussing this point a Fox arrived on the scene, and he wanted to hear all about it. When the case was laid before him, the Snake said: 'Am I not in the right, for I am very hungry and want to swallow the Frog?'

"But the Fox would not give the verdict until he had seen the Frog lift the tree, so he said to the Snake: 'Release the Frog's leg and let him go and raise the tree,' which the Frog did at once.

"The Fox said: 'Truly the Frog is very strong to lift so large a tree. Now, Snake, you go under it, and show us how you were lying beneath the tree.' So the Snake went, thinking he would surely win the case as the judge was taking so much trouble over it, but the Snake was no sooner under the tree than the Fox called out: 'Frog, let go the tree,' and down it came right on the Snake, holding him so that he could not get away.

"The Fox then said to the Snake: 'You are entirely in the wrong, for your friend did a kindness to you in helping you in your trouble, but you want to repay him by a bad deed—you want to swallow him.'

“Thereupon they all went away, leaving the Snake under the tree, as no one would help him again for fear of his ingratitude.

“The Frog thanked the Fox for saving him, and gave him his load of peanuts, and they became great friends.”

At the close of this story no one had a word to say in defence of the Snake's ingratitude. All thought he was rightly punished in being left beneath the tree to starve to death, and Bakula remarked that: “Ingratitude is a crime so black that no one ever owned to being guilty of it, and everybody is ready to condemn it in others.”

This story had so swept sleep from their eyes that they begged Bakula to tell them another of his stories; but he said he could not recall any more stories that night; and then another lad volunteered, and, with much laughter, told the following story of the trick a jocular boy played on two friends. I call this—

“Inquiry should come before Anger.”

“Once upon a time a Wine-gatherer and a Fisherman became great friends; they ate together, walked and talked together, and went to work together; and when one went to collect wine

from his palm-trees the other would look after his fish-traps in the streams and pools near to the palm-trees; and after their work was finished they would meet in the booth to drink the wine and cook and eat the fish together.

“One day, while thus eating and drinking, the Wine-gatherer said: ‘There is no one who can break the strong friendship that exists between us two,’ and the Fisherman assented, saying: ‘Why, if you had not mentioned it, I was going to remark that no one can separate us one from the other.’

“A frolicsome boy heard them make this covenant of friendship, and laughingly said to himself: ‘When they go away I will do that which will test their friendship for each other.’

“In a short time the two friends returned together to their town, and when they had gone the boy took the hoop and climbed up the palm-trees, and removed all the small calabashes that were placed there to catch the palm-wine, and then he went to the pools and streams and gathered all the fish-traps, and put the calabashes in their place, and the fish-traps he tied to the palm-trees. Having thus changed them he returned to his town.

Next morning the Wine-gatherer and the Fisherman awoke, and calling each other they started for the valley where their work was, and

there parted—one to look at his calabashes on the palm-trees, and the other to visit his fish-traps.

“The Wine-gatherer, on arriving at the booth, took his hoop and climbed a palm-tree, and there he found, not his calabash, but a fish-trap; he pulled it off and threw it down in anger, and descended the palm. Thus he went from palm to palm and found nothing but fish-traps, which he collected and carried to the booth, and sat down to wait for his friend, full of wrath and indignation.

“While this was happening the Fisherman was going from pool to stream, finding nothing but small calabashes floating on the water where he had put fish-traps the night before. In great anger he gathered them up and carried them to the booth, and there he met his friend, who said: ‘Those calabashes, are they not mine?’

“To him the Fisherman replied: ‘Those fish-traps, are they not mine?’

“‘Why did you put your useless fish-traps in my palm-trees?’ excitedly asked the Wine-gatherer.

“‘Why did you put your silly calabashes in my streams and pools?’ retorted the Fisherman.

“And without more ado they stood up and beat each other, and cut each other, until at last they fell exhausted to the ground.

“At this moment the mischievous boy arrived, and seeing their plight, said : ‘What ! are you not friends? Why have you been beating each other? I heard your covenant of friendship the other day, and because I wanted to try it I went and changed your things. Now you have been quarrelling with each other without talking matters over. Inquiry should come first, and anger follow after.’”

This story elicited many a chuckle from the listeners; but at last, overcome by sleep, they rolled themselves in their mats and were soon in the land of dreams. The next morning they were astir before sunrise, and after traversing many hills and wading several swamps and streams Bakula and his friends reached their noon camping-place, tired, hungry and disagreeable. Everybody threw down his or her load, and stretched themselves in the shade.

It was a wearisome road. The hills were steep, the paths simply rain-washed gutters where all the earth had been swept away by the torrents, leaving only the rough stones sticking up, and often on either side of the track was tall grass from ten to twelve feet high that interlocked their stalks when the storm winds played among the hills or whirled through the valleys, so that the travellers as they pushed their way forward had frequently

Photo.]

JUNGLE PATH THROUGH THE FOREST
(Said to be haunted by bad spirits at night.)

[Rev. R. H. Kirkland.]

to put their arms before them to keep the points of grass out of their eyes and the sharp blades from cutting their faces.

Huge boulders like giants' marbles were strewn about the hill-tops, and some were clinging to the sides of the hills, while others were lying about the valleys as though the players in their games had thrown them too far. The travellers had, with difficulty, to wind round or clamber over them, and every extra exertion was felt in such a tropical heat.

After resting they ate some of their *kwanga* loaves, and, bathing in the turbid river, they picked up their burdens to start again on their journey, when Old Plaited-Beard kicked his foot against a stone. A look of horror came into his beady eyes at the ill omen against himself.

The snake omen was against the whole party, but this was against the individual. On a journey like this the omen might mean death at the end of the journey to whomsoever it occurred, and the only way to counteract its potency in this case was to go right back home and stay there.

Old Plaited-Beard was too superstitious to disregard the portent, and with many a muttered curse on his carelessness he turned his face homewards, having taken the long fatiguing journey to no purpose. No one regretted his going, for

he was as cantankerous as he was superstitious.

His wives and followers at first refused to return with him; but the old man, infuriated at their unwillingness, poured upon them a torrent of abuse, charged them with bewitching him to kick the stone, and threatened them with the curses of his various fetishes in such invectives that they trembled before him, and, gathering their goods, followed him with hearts full of fear and hate.

We lost so much time over these events that instead of reaching our destination that evening we were compelled to spend another night on the road. The whole of the next morning was leisurely spent in resting and dressing.

Satu and his followers bathed during the morning, using soap-worts, which lather well, instead of soap. Then one of his wives combed out and replaited his hair, and dusted it with fine camwood powder. Another wife very carefully rubbed his face, body, legs and arms with palm-oil, to render the skin soft and cool; and a third pounded some camwood into a fine powder, and, putting it into a coarse mesh cloth, dabbed the oiled skin with the cosmetic, giving it a pleasant look and an appearance of being well groomed. A thick band of brilliant red was drawn across the forehead,

and Satu went and lolled on a mat to wait for those who had not such expert wives.

The wives rubbed one another with palm-oil, and dusted each other with the red camwood powder. Bakulu and his friends operated, with the skill of experience, on each other, and I came in for such a polishing that I shone like gold on my owner's neck.

These toilet operations being completed, bundles were untied and a miscellaneous assortment of garments and gaudy coloured cloths were brought to light, and were donned with all seriousness.

The eight bandsmen were adorned in two old pairs of trousers, three waistcoats, one pair of boots—down at the heels and out at the toes, two jackets with patches of different colours on the sleeves, and two peaked hats that, like their other articles of attire, had seen better days in other climes. The intervals in their dress were filled with diverse pieces of gaily coloured cloth. Satu followed, invested in a bright red blanket round his loins, two waistcoats, old and ill-fitting, across his chest, a heavy brown coat on his back, and a large brass fireman's helmet on his head. Behind him came his wives, the foremost of whom carried a red, black and green parasol over her husband's head. The sun blazed, and poor Satu perspired

in the costume that had cost him a heavy tusk of ivory.

The other head men were arrayed in soldiers' coats of diverse ranks and regiments—in their selection they had not been captivated by the stripes on the arms, but by the colours. Hence you saw a colonel of one regiment hob-nobbing with the corporal of another. Bakula wore a cloth of gorgeous colours round his waist, a brewer's cap on his head, one stocking (he owned a pair, but had lent the other to his particular friend) on one leg, a boot on the other, and a beaming self-satisfied smile on his face.

Fortunately we had not far to go. Up a slight hill, across a plateau, and there stood the town we had come to honour with our presence.

Chapter X

Our Reception and Entertainment

The welcome of Tonzeka and his people—A case judged—We find the white man in Tonzeka's town—Tonzeka defends the white man—He complains of the effect of the white man's preaching—A drunken bout.

THE whole town turned out to welcome us with shouts, gun-firing, clapping of hands, trillings, and the slapping of their open mouths with the palms of their hands. The folk lined the paths leading to their chief's house, and saluted and chaffed us good-humouredly as we threaded our way to it preceded by our admired band. Satu's brass helmet excited much envy and many remarks. It was the first time such a head-gear had been seen in those parts, and naturally called for various comments on its size, brightness and value.

Chief Tonzeka received us heartily, and having exchanged greetings with us, showed Satu and his followers the quarters they were to occupy during their visit, and deputed a large number of women to fetch firewood and water, and also cook for us.

90 Our Reception and Entertainment

The women had to supply all the vegetable foods for our meals, and Tonzeka sent them the necessary meat and fish. Tonzeka proved the genuineness of his hospitality by killing a large pig, thus supplying Satu and his people with the meat that all Congos love so well.

We incidentally heard there was a white man—one of those *Mundele wa Nzambi* (white men of God) visiting the town, but we did not see him until the next evening.

While the women were busy preparing the evening meal, Satu and his folk foregathered in the chief's courtyard (*lumbu*) to exchange news, to talk about trade, about politics, and about the different cases that had been brought to them for settlement as chiefs and head men.

Tonzeka gave as an example of the foolishness of the people in his district the following case that was brought before him for judgment.

“A pig belonging to the Lumu people was killed by a Manga man on a farm belonging to one of his wives. The Lumu folk demanded payment for the pig; but this was refused on the ground that any pigs found digging up cassava roots on a farm can be killed. After a time the Manga women went to work that piece of ground again, and the Lumu women met them there, and, being more numerous, took away the hoes belong-

ing to the Manga women, and claimed the land as their pig was killed on it, and no compensation had been paid for it. That evening the chief of Manga sent a message to the chief of Lumu, and the messenger carried a gun, which he should not have done, so the Lumu people took the gun away from him on the plea that he was bringing force into their town."

"How did you settle that palaver?" asked Satu.

"Well, you know," replied Tonzeka, "that any pig found on another's farm may be killed, and in some parts of the country the man who kills it can take half the flesh for the trouble of killing it, and to compensate him for the damage done to his farm; and the other half he sends to the owner of the pig. In this part, when a pig is killed for trespassing, the one who kills it leaves it at the place where it was slain, and sends to tell the owner what he has done, and he himself has to fetch the carcass, and as he finds it on another person's farm he has sure proof that it has trespassed."

"Yes," assented Satu, "I know those are the different customs, and in our district we always take half the pig."

"But," continued Tonzeka, "this case was complicated because the Manga people allowed their

92 Our Reception and Entertainment

messenger to take a gun with him when he was sent with their message."

"That was very foolish of them," said Satu, "but how did you decide the case?"

"I judged it thus," answered Tonzeka. "I fined the Lumu people one pig for attempting to claim land which did not belong to them, as the killing of a pig gave them no rights over the land on which it was killed; and I fined the Manga people one goat, as the messenger had no right to carry a gun when he went to deliver a message. It was taking force into another's town, and was also an exhibition of insolence."

"You judged wisely," commented Satu, "and I hope you received a fat pig and a large goat for your trouble."

"You will be able to judge that for yourselves," laughingly replied Tonzeka, "for the fines¹ only arrived this morning, and you will be eating the pig for your evening meal."

Satu expressed the hope that he would receive such splendid fines every day.

Tonzeka then informed his visitors that there was a white man staying in his town, and promised to take his friend Satu to see him.

"I wonder if it is the same one whom we drove out of our town?" queried Satu.

¹ See note 125, p. 348.

“Why did you drive him away?” asked Tonzeka, with a note of surprise in his voice. “Surely he had done no harm to either you or your people?”

In an apologetic tone Satu admitted that he had not done them any harm, for they did not give him an opportunity, as they would not allow him to enter the town. “But Old Plaited-Beard told us such horrible things against the white men that if I had not been there my people would have killed this one. What is he doing in your town?”

To him Tonzeka replied: “This white man comes to see us very often, and tells us about God, and about His Son Jesus Christ, Who, so the white man says, came to die for us on a cross. I don’t understand all his palavers; but he washes the sores of old and young, rich and poor, head men and slaves, puts good medicine on them, ties them up with his own white fingers, and the sores are quickly healed. We understand that! You know my mother was very ill, and we tried one *nganga* after another, but they failed to cure her, although they ‘ate’ up a lot of money. Then this white man came on one of his visits, and in two or three days she was fully restored to health by the white man’s medicines.”

“Yes,” remarked Satu, “perhaps he gave her the sickness by his witchcraft, and therefore could

easily cure her. These white men are exceedingly cunning."

"I know what you mean," replied Tonzeka. "That is what our *ngangas* do to make money out of us. The *ngangas* by means of their charms and fetishes cause our diseases, and they receive fees for doing so; by their fetishes they curse us or try to cure us, and again they receive fees, and thus they become rich by our complaints. This white man did not charge for the medicine, and what is more he gave my mother some of his own food to make her strong."

"I did not quite mean that," said Satu, "but these white men are here to buy up the dead bodies of our relatives, which they store in their houses, and on the first good chance they send them away in their ships to Mputu to become their slaves. They have wonderful magic for restoring the spirits to the bodies." And as he spoke a look of alarm and hate came into his eyes, for he called to mind his fear that his own brother and various other relatives were, as he was speaking, toiling in farms and forests for their dreaded white masters.

With an air of superior knowledge Tonzeka said to his honoured visitor: "There was a time when I also firmly believed what you have just stated; but I and many of my people have been

to this white man's station. He received us very kindly and showed us over his house; and truly, we saw no shelves¹ there, and no places where he could keep dead bodies. When we had an opportunity we entered his stores, medicine-house, boys' quarters, and nowhere did we find a place where he could stow away dead bodies. After two or three visits we came to the conclusion that these falsehoods had been started by our *ngangas* to protect their own interests."

Satu expressed his astonishment at what he had heard; but still doubting, asked: "Did you go into all the rooms in his house, and does he ever send bales and boxes to the coast?"

"Yes," replied Tonzeka, "I went into all the rooms, for one of the boys showed me every nook and corner one day while the white man was absent. He does not trade, consequently he has no bales and boxes to send to the coast. Friend Satu, do not believe those lies about the white man. Evidently ivory and rubber have a value in their country. Why, the white man himself showed me a coat and a sheet made of rubber that no water could pass through. I tried them myself; and I understand that in their country it rains all the year round, for they have no dry season as we have, and if they had no rubber they

¹ See note 26, p. 349.

96 Our Reception and Entertainment

could not make rubber coats, and would have to stay in their houses every day."

Satu thanked his friend and said: "What you tell me about rubber coats and sheets quite accounts for the presence of traders in our country; but these 'white men of God' do not trade. Why are they here?" And a look of sly triumph came into his eyes as he continued: "They don't buy rubber, they don't deal in ivory, they don't trade in anything, and, according to your own statement, they don't even buy dead bodies. Why are they here? That is what I want to know?"

"That is the very question I put to this white man myself," replied Tonzeka, "and I will try to give you his answer. He said: A very long time ago, years and years ago, the people in his country were just like the people are now in our country. They were naked, painted savages that lived in huts in their forests. They had spears and knives, and fought each other as we do. They had canoes like ours, and wore brass armlets and anklets very much the same as ours. They believed in fetishes, charms and *ngangas*; and, to use his own words, his forefathers lived wretched lives and died miserable deaths without God and without hope. Then some messengers brought to his country the wonderful news about God, about

Jesus Christ, and about the great Salvation, and the hearts and lives of many thousands were changed and filled with joy and pity—joy because they were saved, and pity for us who know not of God's great love for all, for so great is His love that He freely gave His beloved Son to die for us. Now these people have sent this white man and others like him to pass on the blessings of Jesus and His grand salvation to us, for it seems that this Jesus gave them a command to preach the good news to everybody all over the world.

"I spent nearly a whole evening in talking these palavers over with the white man, and I have told you all I have remembered; but I am afraid I have forgotten a great many of his words."

Again Satu thanked his friend, and promised to ponder in his heart the words he had heard, or, as he expressed it: "To drink water over them."

"Well," said Tonzeka, "I have sent two of my sons to the white man's school, and they are learning to read, write, do carpentry and to make bricks. They are gaining much knowledge, but there is one thing I do not like about this white man."

"What is that?" eagerly asked Satu.

Tonzeka paused a few moments before replying, and then he broke out in a self-pitying tone: "This white man tells me that I am a bad man,

98   Our Reception and Entertainment

because I lie, steal, commit adultery and become often very drunk, and in doing these bad deeds I am breaking God's laws, and shall be punished for doing so. When he talks like that I always feel very uncomfortable, for I know that what he says is perfectly true. I never heard before that God had given any laws for us to obey, because, as you know, we have no books; yet when we get drunk, or thief, or lie, or do any other bad action, something inside tells us that they are wrong and condemns us; but we are not ashamed, because everybody does them. If he would give us medicine, and teach our boys and girls it would be all right, but when he talks God's palavers I do not like him, for he makes my 'heart stand up' with fear."

Satu was about to condole with him, but there was a general movement towards the fires, for by now the saucepans were steaming with cooked food, and all the folk were eagerly anticipating the feast of pig and pudding. Satu turned these matters over in his mind, and remarked to one of his head men: "After all, there are some disadvantages in having a white man in one's town, if he makes us uncomfortable in our hearts; and," he continued, "I am not sure whether Tonzeka is bewitched by the white man, or is sharing profits with the white man in the sale of dead bodies."

After the evening meal Tonzeka gave another proof of his hospitality. He opened some cases of trade gin¹ and two demijohns of rum, and invited Satu and his party to a drinking bout.

The fiery liquor quickly induced a quarrelsomeness in the drinkers that I thought would cause such murderous fights that the town would be drenched with blood; indeed, Bakula received a nasty cut on his arm, and several others were wounded and bruised. But this intoxicated madness was fortunately soon succeeded by a maudlin state, in which the carousers embraced each other, shouted senseless sayings, joined in ribald refrains, and engaged in obscene dances until at last the potions gained the mastery and they fell on the ground in sottish sleep—mere breathing logs.

Borne on the breeze from a distant part of the town came the evening hymn of the white man and his boys, and distinctly the words were carried to me—

“God loved the world of sinners lost
And ruined by the fall;
Salvation full, at highest cost,
He offers free to all.
Oh, 'twas love, 'twas wondrous love!
The love of God to me!
It brought my Saviour from above
To die on Calvary.”

---

¹ See note 27, p. 349.

Chapter XI

Satu visits the White Man

Bakula goes to the white man to have his wound dressed—White man puts in a good word for the traders—Bakula is touched by the white man's kindness—A native dance—An exhibition of native pride—A long talk with the white man—We gain many new ideas from our conversation—Bakula has another interview with the white man, and they become good friends.

THE next morning the sun rose with clear-eyed brightness, oblivious of all that had occurred during his absence through the night, for he and the moon never approach near enough to each other to exchange confidences. Notwithstanding the sun's obliviousness, the results of the night's debauchery were evident in all who had taken part in it. Some ate monkey peppers, others bits of kola-nuts as pick-me-ups, and others took a plunge bath in the nearest stream; but headaches, wounds and bruises were not easily removed by such means.

During the afternoon those who had smarting cuts went shamefacedly to the white man to have them bandaged with his soothing ointments, and among those who went was Bakula. He thought

Photo]

WATHEN: THE DISPENSARY.
WATHEN: THE BOYS' QUARTERS.

Bricks made by schoolboys and buildings erected by old school lads.

[Rev. J. H. Weeks.

the white man would not know him in his "dress costume"; but I saw that the white man recognized him at once, though he said nothing at the time.

The white man carefully dressed the wounds, and then asked them how they came by them.

"We don't know," they answered, "for we got madly drunk last night on gin and rum, then we had a fight and cut each other. We were too stupidly intoxicated to remember which one cut the other, and who started the quarrel."

"I am sorry the traders sell you such vile stuff. It maddens you when you drink it, and it is the chief cause among you of a great amount of sickness, and of a large number of the fights that occur between your towns and villages," quietly and sadly replied the white man.

"Yes," they asserted in chorus, "the traders are all as bad as the things they sell us."

"No, they are not all bad," sharply answered the white man, "and neither are all the articles they sell bad. You can buy from them good cloth for covering yourselves, blankets to keep you warm in the cold season, nails and tools for building your houses, soap, candles, saucepans, tins of provisions, and many other things that are good, and help to make your lives comfortable."

"That is so," they assented, "but when our

heads ache with the bad gin, we forget the many good articles we can buy of them."

"I know many of those traders," continued the white man, "who hate selling gin and rum to you, and wish a law¹ could be enforced to stop all trade in them; but you are such fools, and will buy drink; and there is so large a profit on it that their masters in Mputu make them sell it to you.² Some of the traders are very good men, and perform many acts of kindness to you black people. Do your wives throw away all the pumpkins in their farms because a few have maggots in them?"

"No, of course not," they sheepishly replied; "our wives throw only the rotten ones away."

"Well," rejoined the white man, "do not speak ill of all the traders because some cheat and rob you; nor condemn all their goods because they sell these accursed fiery waters that turn your towns into pandemoniums, and you into beasts and fiends. Buy the good articles they have, and let the bad ones alone."

Bakula was astonished that the white man had not accused him of striking at his outstretched, friendly hand. He was in a quandary. Did the white man recognize him or not? Or was he simply waiting his opportunity to punish him for what

¹ See note 28, p. 349.

² See note 29, p. 350.

he was now heartily ashamed? He was fearful lest the latter was the explanation, and he had almost made up his mind to put the matter to the test, and ask the white man; but just then the drums began to beat, and hurriedly taking farewell of their friend who had so patiently dressed their wounds and given them good counsel, they ran back to the chief's courtyard.

To the native there is something electrical, moving, exhilarating about the beat of a native drum. Directly he hears it his body begins to twitch and sway to and fro in rhythm to the beat, a smile spreads over his face, weariness is forgotten, dull care is thrown to the winds, and he is soon shuffling round the circle, or has taken his place in the line, clapping his hands, and singing a chorus in admirable time.

Bakula and his townsmen were no exception, for even now in their running they kept step to the beat of the drum. On their arrival they took their place in the line of male dancers. The particular dance to the fore was called "Sala." A medium drum was used, and the formation was in two lines, one of each sex. This dance was characterized by a rapid shaking of the whole body; and during it they made up songs about one another, causing endless amusement by their pointed remarks, innuendoes, and by-play.

While the dance was in progress a member of Tonzeka's town went over to the drum, and by beating on it carried on a conversation such as the following, asking questions and replying to them himself.

"Welcome to you, chief Satu. Are you quite well?"

"I am quite well," replies the drummer.

"Have you come a long way?"

"Yes, my town is very far away."

"Are you very rich?"

"Yes, I have plenty of wives, slaves, pigs, goats, cloth and money. I am so wealthy that I really don't know how rich I am. I don't know what to do with my money. It fills my bags, boxes and houses."

"Have you much with you?"

"Yes, my pouches and bundles are full."

"Give me some of it, as you are so rich."

And foolish Satu, flattered by this pretended conversation out of his usual caution, and in the vanity and pride of the moment, handed over some thirty shillings' worth of brass rods. Grati-fied by the largesse the drummer beat away and sang a recitative in praise of Satu's generosity, and the object of all this by-play sat swelling with self-complacency.

No sooner did the first drummer drop the drum

than Bakula darted forward, and with laughing eyes and skilful hands beat out a conversation in fulsome praise of Tonzeka; his riches, his prowess in war, his unstinted hospitality—all received their full meed of wheedling adulation, and at last came the expected request: "As you are so rich, so great, so generous a man, give me some of your money."

And poor, cajoled Tonzeka had to pass over thirty-five shillings' worth of brass rods, for it would never have done not to surpass his visitor, Satu.

Bakula went to share his spoils with some friends; and another man took the drum and tapped out flatteries about the different head men with varying success, until he received what he considered a very mean present.

Then the disappointed drummer rapped out a song on stinginess so biting and sarcastic that sharp words were bandied about from side to side, and what began as an amusing dance ended in a *mêlée* that engendered bad blood between the persons concerned for many a day.

As soon as the noise had quieted down, Tonzeka offered to take his visitor to see the white man, but through an indefinable fear Satu shrank from going in the broad daylight, and promised to accept the invitation after the evening meal. So

at the appointed time Tonzeka called Satu, and together they walked over to the white man's quarters, followed by a large number of people.

The white man had heard of the proposed visit, and with the help of boxes and rugs had prepared seats for the coming visitors.

Satu, however, before trusting himself to the improvised chair, lifted the rug, shook the box to test its stability, and then gingerly took his seat. There was more than a rumour afloat that the King of Congo had murdered his mother by inviting her to sit on a mat which gave way beneath her. It had precipitated her, it was said, into a carefully prepared hole, and directly the wretched woman disappeared, the unnatural son ordered her to be buried alive.

The white man was fully conscious of Satu's implied distrust, but said nothing; and Tonzeka pompously introduced Satu and some of the head men who had accompanied him.

During the speech Satu sat uneasily on his seat, casting furtive glances at the slim, kindly-faced white man before him. After all he did not look so terrible that a whole town should go frantic with fear of him.

When Tonzeka had concluded his speech the white man replied: "I am so glad to see Satu, for I have often heard of him, and a few weeks ago

I went to visit him, but through some silly prejudice he would not give me hospitality, and sent me and my people to sleep in the damp with the mosquitoes at the bottom of his hill. Since then I have heard that some of his people wanted to kill me, but he would not let them ;” and leaning forward he took Satu’s hand in his, and said : “ I thank you very much for not only saving my life, but the lives of those who were with me. There was a lad who struck at my outstretched hand. This afternoon he came for medicine for a bad cut on his arm, thinking I did not know him. There he is, standing with the firelight full on his face. Will he not shake hands and be friends ? ”

And, rising, the white man went with outstretched hand to Bakula, who with much trepidation put his hand nervously into the very hand at which he had so cruelly aimed a heavy blow. In broken sentences Bakula begged forgiveness, which was freely given.

Everybody now felt thoroughly at home with each other, especially when Satu had cordially invited the white man to visit him, promising better hospitality next time ; and the white man heartily accepted the invitation, promising, on his part, to come soon. Then came a long series of questions about Mputu (the countries of the white man) ; and while the white man told them of the great

houses with many rooms, the innumerable streets, the broad roads, the trams, horses, and the size of the cities and towns, the audience sat with wide-eyed astonishment, broken only by the snapping of fingers and exclamations of surprise.

At last one boy put their thoughts into words by asking if the white man was speaking the truth; because, said he : "We have always believed that you white folk live underneath the sea."

"Why do you think that?" laughingly asked the white man.

"For two very good reasons," asserted the boy, rather aggressively. He did not like being laughed at before all the others, for he was only stating what they all believed.

"State your reasons," said the white man kindly, for he saw that the boy was hurt by his laughter.

Encouraged thus, the boy said : "When we stand on the shore at Ambrezette, or at any other of the trading-stations on the sea-coast, we see the ships come in, and what do we notice first? Not the big part of the ship at the bottom (the hull), but the stick at the top (the mast), and when the ship has discharged all its goods on the beach, and filled up again with palm-oil, rubber, ivory, palm-kernels and peanuts, it goes away, and the part that we see last is the topmost post. Of

course it comes up out of the sea. That is why we first notice the top of the 'stick,' and it goes down into the sea; that is why the top of the 'stick' is last seen."

"Yes, that is very good! What is your second reason?" asked the white man.

"The second reason is this: all we people who live on the earth have curly hair; but all you white folk, because you live under the sea, have straight hair. That is because the action of the water has taken all the curl out of your hair."

The white man with much difficulty suppressed his laughter, and proceeded to give them a simple lesson on the rotundity of the earth. They had all seen eclipses of the moon, and starting from that fact, and using his candle and various articles on the table as his apparatus, he tried to show them that only round objects threw round shadows on the wall of the adjacent house. They were interested, and pretended to be convinced, but how many of them went to bed that night still believing in the flatness of the earth he never knew.

Then came a series of questions, not prompted by impertinence, but by a healthy and natural curiosity. Questions such as: "Is there plenty of food in your country? How many wives have you in Mputu? Were you once as little as our babies?

Have you a mother, father, brothers and sisters? Did they turn you out of your country because you are a bad man? How do you make matches? Who makes the cloth and the different articles we see in the traders' stores? How do you make candles, soap, boots, and from what are they made? Why are you white and we black?" The white man patiently answered these questions to the best of his ability; but I noticed that whenever possible he worked his answers round to God's palaver—he told them how a thing was made, that they themselves could make it, and would, by this time, have found out how to make it, only their witch-doctors taught them that anything new, anything out of the ordinary, anything that showed skill, was the result of witchcraft, and hence they killed off their wise and clever men; and lastly, "God's palaver, when it enters the heart, sets them free from all their superstitious fear of the *ngangas*, and gives true wisdom and guidance."

It was now far into the night, and Satu was about to rise when the white man said: "It is very late, and I have attempted to answer your many questions. Now I am going to ask you all as a favour to stay while we have prayers."

Satu very courteously thanked the white man for taking so much trouble and for telling them so many wonderful things. They would willingly

stay to prayers and listen while the white man talked to God; but "Excuse us now, we are tired, and must go to sleep." The white man looked sadly disappointed, but bade us "to go and sleep well."

As we were returning to our quarters some one asked Satu: "Why did you not stay for prayers?"

"I was afraid the white man's God would bewitch me; or that the white man himself might do so," answered Satu. That night Bakula could not sleep, but frequently I heard him murmur: "He dressed my wound with the same hand I tried to strike."

During the next morning Bakula and a few of the young men went to greet the white man, whom they found busy washing and dressing sores, and dispensing medicine to the sick. Bakula shyly went forward to have his wound dressed, and when it was finished the white man asked his name; but Bakula, filled with fear, gave his Santu name¹—Dom Pedro. "No, I don't want your Santu," said the white man, "but your proper name. Do you still distrust me? Never mind, tell me when you know me better."

"I will tell you now," he replied. "I will not doubt you any more. My name is Bakula."

When the white man had finished his medical

¹ See note 30, p. 350.

work we all sat down for another talk, and I noticed that Bakula sat very close to his white friend's chair, and hesitatingly he put the following question: "You tell us your country is very beautiful; that there is plenty to eat; that your parents and brothers and sisters are living there; that you were not turned out for being a bad man. Why, therefore, have you come to this country, with its rough roads, its swamps, and its fevers?"

Then the white man unfolded before Bakula and his companions the wonderful story of Jesus Christ, from the time He left heaven on His mission of Redemption, until He returned to heaven the Author of eternal salvation. The audience listened attentively to this delightfully strange story, and Bakula, looking up, exclaimed in surprised tones—

"Why, Jesus Christ was just like you! He left all for us, the same as you have done."

The white man was strangely and deeply moved as he replied—

"No, Jesus Christ did not copy me, but I try day by day to imitate Him. It is for His sake, Bakula, that I forgave you, and have tried to return good for evil, love for hate, and am willing to die that you all may hear and believe in His great salvation."

After a little more conversation they separated,

Bakula and his friends returning to their huts solemnized, for a time, by what they had seen and heard; and the white man, calling a few of his lads, went, with his medicines and his message of God's love, to spend a few hours in a neighbouring village.

Chapter XII

Native Games and Pastimes

Make-believe games—"Biti" and needle—Game with canna seeds—Hoop game—"Mbele," or Knife game—The story of "The Four Wonders," or a puzzle story—Conundrums—"The Adventures of the Twins."

AFTER the first novelty of our visit had passed away the women and girls went daily, with dull regularity, to the farms; but only those men who were obliged went to the markets for trading purposes, or to the forests for building materials for their houses. The men and lads who were able postponed, out of respect to their visitors, all those occupations that would not suffer from delay, and gave themselves to games, asking conundrums, and telling stories to entertain their visitors.

The children had their make-believe house-keeping, cooking, trading and marketing; the older ones their mimic wars, their mock hunts and their pretended palavers. The small girls had their sticks, or pieces of cassava roots, to represent dolls,¹ and they played with them as such, carrying them tied by old rags to their backs, or

¹ See note 31, p. 350.

on their hips as their mothers had carried the children themselves when babies.

The small boys procured gourds, old tins, reeds and small drums, and imitated a band, and they made about as much music by their efforts as their elders discoursed from ivory trumpets and well-made drums. With bits of sticks, reeds and grass they made toy houses with mud walls; and with pieces of broken saucepans, old tins and any odds and ends they could borrow from their mothers' houses, they furnished themselves with the necessary articles for their pretend-game of housekeeping, receiving visits from each other, and inviting one another to their make-believe feasts. The older and more active lads played at hockey, on which they expended a great amount of boisterous, if unskilful, energy; and the quieter ones were very expert in using their fingers and toes in making cat's cradles of many and intricate designs.

Bakula was always selected to find the needle because of his quick ear, whenever the following game was played with *biti* and needle: The players were divided into two sides, which we will call A and B. All the players had a musical instrument called a *biti*, which is a kind of *marimba*. Side A sent out one of its men, and secreted a needle in his absence in full view of

side B, which the one sent out had to find guided only by side B playing simultaneously an agreed-upon note. Side B decided what the guiding note should be.

On the return of the needle-seeker, side B began to play their *biti*, and when the needle-seeker approached near the hiding-place of the needle, the guiding note was played, and as he receded from it the guiding note was left out of the tune.

The needle-seeker had not only to find the needle, but also to name the guiding note. If he found the needle, it counted one game to his side, and either he or another on side A went out again. When he failed in his search then it counted one game to side B, and one on that side went out.

Of course the *biti* players tried to hide the guiding note by playing rapidly, and covering it with variations on the other metal reeds. A quick ear to catch the repetition, or the absence of a particular note was necessary for this game.

One day Bakula stopped to watch the following game that was being played by some lads. The beautiful, round, black seeds of the canna plant, which grows wild in most parts of Congo, are called *loso*, and that is also the name of the game. These seeds are about the size of peas.

1. SCHOOLBOYS PLAYING HOCKEY.
2. AT THE GIANT STRIDE. 3. GYMNASTICS.

The players are divided into two sides, which for clearness we will call A and B, and they form a circle as they sit on the ground. Side 'A' plays first, and the thrower takes about twenty seeds in each hand. He throws them out from his hands alternately, counting, as he throws, one, two, three, and so on up to ten, and the rest he throws helter-skelter over the cleared space in front of him, yet in such a way as not to 'dis-arrange the positions of the first ten seeds thrown; but he tries to do it as indifferently as he possibly can.

Now before beginning to throw the seeds, side A has agreed among themselves that seed number *five* shall be the playing seed; so the seeds having been thrown, one lad on the side 'A' withdraws out of sight and hearing. Then if side B has spotted the playing seed *five*, they pick it up and say: "That is the seed, and its number is *five*." That counts as one game to them. If, however, they have not spotted the right seed and pick up the wrong one, then a lad on side A touches the right seed, and the one who left the circle is called back and picks up the seed that was touched by the player on his side. That then counts as one game to them—to side A. Any touching or picking up of the wrong seed by a player is counted as a game to the other side.

Supposing that side A says that seed *five*, which side B touched, is not the playing seed, then side B removes it, and one on side A to carry on the cheat touches, say, seed *eight*, then the lad who left is recalled and, of course, he finds seed *five* is gone, and should he try to help the cheating by picking up another seed he must declare its number, and there is every probability that he will not by chance pick up seed *eight*, and also declare the same number as the boy who touched it.

To find out the right seed and number the opponents have to watch the throwing for any hesitation at a particular number, or to see if a seed is purposely thrown to one side; they have to listen for any emphasis on a particular number, and also watch the eyes of their opponents to see if they are all looking towards one particular seed.

Again, the lad who leaves the circle must carry away with him a clear plan of how the seeds lay, so that he may be sure of picking up the right one, as any blunder made counts as a game to the other side.

The boys of the town had another game of which they were very fond. It was played with a hoop, and each player had a string two or three yards long and weighted at each end. Sides were

arranged which had to take their stand in "towns" from twenty to twenty-five yards apart. The hoop is trundled from side A towards side B, and as it approaches side B all the players on that side throw their weighted strings (or toy bolases) at it so as to entangle it, and the boy whose "bolas" entangles the hoop picks up one end of his string and swings the hoop round and round his head as he walks with it towards side A. Should he deposit it in their town without dropping the hoop from the bolas, it counts one game to side B. If the hoop is either not entangled, or drops while being whirled, the game counts to the other side, *i. e.* to side A. Sometimes the winner is challenged to whirl the hoop near the ground and to jump over it while spinning without its touching the ground.

If two or more strings entangle the hoop, then the boys owning those strings must carry the hoop between them. The hoop must on no consideration be touched by the hands of those on side B, unless no string entangles it, when it is thrown back to side A and counts as one game to them. After a set of twenty games the other side trundles the hoop. A modification is made in the game by throwing the hoop in the air.

The next game that I observed, and the last that I shall describe, is called *Mbele* (or Knife). It

is played either by the hands and arms, or feet and legs, or by moving the knees only. The players form a line, and the first lad in the line is called "King." The "King" when he begins the game faces the lad who stood next to him, and throws out both his hands, draws them back to his breast, waves them in front of himself parallel with his breast, and after making several feints he shoots out one hand. If the lad standing in opposition to him is able to meet the "thrust" three times by throwing out the corresponding hand, the "King" has to take his place at the bottom of the line. If, however, no one in the line is able to meet the "thrust" after three tries, then the last lad in the line is called a "slave," and stands out of the game.

The "King," who is generally an expert player, will sometimes go up and down the line until all the players are "slaves" and he wins. Should the "King" be out in going down the line, then when all become "slaves" to another he has the privilege of winning them back, if he can, from the last one in by playing him.

There are many modifications in the game. The movements are very rapid and cause a great amount of amusement, and help to train the eyes and render the limbs very supple.

Among other games played were "touch," a

kind of "hunt the slipper," with a palm-nut as the "slipper"; "tipit" was also played by the boys sitting in a ring and passing a palm-nut from one to another, and the lad in the centre had to catch the boy who really had the nut and they changed places. Hopping the longest on one leg, throwing into a hole, and backgammon were also in vogue at times. A popular game with small boys was to hide a canna seed in one of five little heaps of dirt, and the opponent had to sweep away the four heaps that did not contain the seed and leave untouched the one heap that hid it. Each success counted as a game to the winner, and every failure as a game to the other side.

A never-ending source of amusement for dark nights when they gathered round their fires in the streets, or for cold, rainy nights when they sat in their houses was to be found in their puzzle stories and conundrums. In nearly every town and village were expert story-tellers and propounders of riddles, who were deservedly the recipients of much local praise and fame for their voluntary efforts to entertain their neighbours.

Tonzeka's town was no exception. Almost every evening, after the meal was over, one or other of these skilled reciters would be called on for a story.

One evening the following wonderful deeds were related, and aroused a great amount of discussion. I must preface this story by saying: The Congo natives think that anything wonderful, anything out of the ordinary injures their social and domestic life, or, as they say, "spoils their country," and is consequently to be condemned and punished. Hence the appeal in this story from one to another to decide who had performed the most extraordinary feat, and was, therefore, worthy of the greatest blame.

The narrator called it

"The Story of the Four Wonders."

"A woman gave birth to a child, who on the day it was born went by itself down to the river to bathe. While there a hunter arrived, who fired his gun.

"'What are you firing at?' asked the baby. 'I am shooting the mosquitoes that are eating my wife's cassava,'¹ replied the hunter.

"'Whoever heard of such a thing before?' said the baby. 'By shooting mosquitoes you are injuring the country.'

"The hunter denied this grave charge, and accused the baby of upsetting the proper order of

¹ Equal to saying: "I am shooting at the gnats that are eating up the turnips,"

things by bathing himself on the very day he was born.

"After much discussion they submitted the case to a chief of a neighbouring town. When he had listened to their wrangling, he said: 'My mouth is locked up in that room, and my wives have taken the key with them to the farms.'

"'Oh,' they rejoined, 'you, by talking when your mouth is fastened up in another room, have destroyed our country, for whoever heard of such a wonder before?'

"After much debate away they went to find some one to settle the matter for them, and by and by they met a man who climbed palm-trees to tap them for palm-wine, and they put the case to him, each accusing the other of disarranging the proper order of earthly ways.

"When they had finished the palm climber said: 'I fell one day from the top of a palm-tree and broke to pieces, and then I went into the town to procure men to carry all my pieces back to my house.' They thereupon fell on him, accusing him of spoiling the country by his wonderful feat. They are still arguing out the matter and cannot agree as to which is worthy of the greatest blame."

At the conclusion each actor in this tale of

wonders had his staunch adherents among the little crowd of listeners. Some contended that the baby had performed the most wonderful feat, and was therefore to be greatly blamed. Others stood by the hunter, for "whoever before had heard of shooting mosquitoes?"

"Did you ever hear of a man talking with his mouth locked up in another room?" aggressively asked a backer of that wonder.

"You are all wrong," shouted a big fellow with a loud voice, "the man who broke to pieces and yet went for carriers to convey the pieces into his town did something that surpassed all the other marvellous deeds."

Feeling ran high, words were bandied about, innuendoes respecting the sad lack of sense that some folk exhibited were freely exchanged; but during a lull in the throwing of wordy missiles, Bakula said: "I heard a riddle the other day to which you cannot give me the answer."

"What is it?" asked several, and the noisy discussion on the wonders ceased at once, and all eyes turned on Bakula.

"*Our master sleeps behind the thorns. What is it?*" he asked, and there was a twinkle of fun in his eye as he propounded the conundrum to them.

One guessed one thing and another something

else, and a poor henpecked man suggested it was a woman behind her hoes; but he was instantly annihilated by the remark that if he were bossed by his wives they were not.

They at last called on Bakula to give the solution, and he said, "*Our master sleeps behind the thorns is our tongue behind the teeth,*" and he saucily continued: "If you don't let it sleep there you will soon be fighting."

They rated him good-humouredly for his insolence, and pretended to punch him as a punishment; but promised to let him go if he would state another riddle.

Bakula, on recovering his breath, asked the following conundrum: "*There are three men carrying a dead one in their teeth.*¹ *What is it?*" To this a man instantly gave the answer: "*A ridge pole held by three king posts.*"

The guesser of Bakula's riddle then gave one as follows: "*The slave my father bought on the market is always standing out (or away) from him.*" After many guesses had been ventured, Bakula gave the proper one, viz. "*Pipe,*" which always stands out (or away) from the smoker.

Bakula had now to give another riddle, and propounded the following one: "*The bird with*

¹ The "forks" cut on upright posts to hold the cross poles are called in Congo *meno*, i. e. teeth.

its head cut off eats up all the food. What is it?" After many wild, unsuccessful attempts one of the men guessed the answer, viz. "*Mortar*."¹ The man who gave this correct solution belonged to Tonzeka's town, and as he said he did not know any conundrums he was asked to give them a story instead, and to this request, after a little hesitation, he acceded by narrating the following tale, called

"The Adventures of the Twins."

"Mr. Tungi built some houses and then married. When he had been married about a year he started on a journey to some distant markets to buy and trade in peanuts. He had not been gone very long when Mrs. Tungi gave birth to male twins.

"When the twins had grown into stout lads their mother told them that their father had gone to trade at some distant markets, but would be returning soon to his town. They at once decided to go and meet him. Their mother prepared some native bread and other food, and in a few days they set out in search of their father.

"After travelling a long way they met a palm-wine gatherer sitting in a palm-frond drinking-

¹ The *mortar* is used for pounding maize, dried cassava, plantains, etc. To the native familiar with the whole process it was a good conundrum.

shelter, who welcomed them and promised to get them some fresh palm-wine. He took his climbing-hoop and together they went to the palm-tree. Before ascending the tree the twins were astonished to see the man take out all his bones and lay them on one side, and then he climbed the tree and brought down a small calabash of palm-wine for the boys, picked up his bones and put them all back again in their places. The lads asked him why he removed his bones before ascending the palm-tree.

“‘Oh,’ he said, ‘if I were to fall I should break them, so I always leave my bones on the ground, and then, should I fall, nothing will be broken.’ They drank his palm-wine, thanked him, and after resting a while started again on their journey.

“They had not travelled very far when they met two men walking towards them whose feet were turned backwards. The twins asked them what accident had twisted their feet in that way.

“They replied : ‘It is no accident, but we turn our feet round when travelling to keep our naked toes from knocking against the stones in the road.’

“The twins had hardly recovered from their surprise when they came across some men whose knees were behind, and others whose arms were

at the back, and others again whose faces were at the back of their heads.

“They inquired the reason for these strange things, and the first said: ‘We have our knees at the back of our legs so that when we fall they will not be cut by the stones.’

“The next replied: ‘We have our arms behind us so that if we fall backwards they will hold us up, and we shall not hurt ourselves.’

“And the last laughingly said: ‘Oh, we have our faces behind our heads so that the long grass by the sides of the roads will neither cut them nor get into our eyes as we push our way through it.’

“‘Well, this is a funny country,’ cried the twins in amazement, ‘people seem to do whatever they like with their bodies.’

“On they went again, and during the afternoon they reached the bank of a river, where they rested under a shady tree. While sitting there they saw men and women, boys and girls coming down the hill to bathe, and they noticed that all of them took out their eyes before they entered the water and left them on the bank with their clothes. They inquired the reason for this wonderful thing, and one of the men said: ‘You see, we bathe here with our mothers, wives and sisters—men and women, boys and girls altogether, hence to

Photo]

BUSY WASHING.

[Rev. F. Aldrieve.

Photo]

RESTING AFTER WASHING.

[Rev. F. Aldrieve.

retain our self-respect and modesty we always take out our eyes before bathing.' The twins were no longer astonished at anything they saw and heard, so they silently assented to what the man told them.

"They camped by the river that night, and early next morning renewed the search for their father. After three or four hours' travelling over the hills, across streams and through dense forests, they arrived at a large market, where all the people, instead of speaking, were making signs to one another as they bought and sold their goods. Upon looking at them more closely they observed that none of them had lower jaws, hence they were not able to speak. They could not inquire into this wonder, as no one was able to talk to them.

"They pushed on across the market, and after walking another hour or two they reached a large river, where they saw a man, with a very heavy load, trying to cross it, and seeing he was in great difficulty they helped him over with his load, and then sat down to have a rest and chat. They told the man they were twin sons of Tungi, and were looking for their father, who left his town many years ago to trade in the distant markets.

"The man said: 'Why, I am Tungi, you must be my sons, and I am just returning to my town.'

“The sons rejoiced in this meeting with their father, and were glad they had helped him over the river, otherwise they would not have known him. They divided the load between them, and soon started for home.

“As the twins walked with their father, they told him of all they had seen and heard during their journey, but they said: ‘In the market we passed this morning we saw people who did all their trading by signs, because they had no lower jaws. Why was that?’

“Their father replied: ‘On the markets in this country there was so much rowing, quarrelling and fighting that they made a law that all those who went to market should leave their lower jaws at home; for if folk cannot talk they won’t quarrel, and hence they will have no reason for fighting. It is talking and wrangling that lead to rows, riots and fights.’

“The twins and their father reached their town again safely, where they were noisily welcomed and feasted; and the twins frequently narrated the marvellous sights they had seen during their travels.”

Chapter XIII

Bakula accompanies an Embassy

A title reverts to Satu—He sends Old Plaited-Beard to the King with a present—The embassy arrives at the King's town—Has an audience in the King's house—King promises to send a deputy to install Satu—King dines with the white man and sees a magic lantern—Bakula and the white man renew their acquaintance—He sleeps on the mission station and hears all about the King's household.

JUST as Satu's visit to Tonzeka was drawing to a close, his departure was hastened by the death of a chief who had bought a life interest in a title that belonged to Satu's family.

It was the custom for a wealthy person to buy of the King the title, we will say, of Tulante, for one slave and five thousand strings of blue pipe beads. If, on his death, his heir is not rich enough to support the title, or for some reason does not want it, he can, with the consent of the King, sell it to another chief for that chief's lifetime. When this second buyer dies his heir cannot take the title unless he has the permission of the family originally holding it, and for that permission he must pay, and the King cannot confer it without the consent of the said family. In

fact, the title reverts to the family that *first bought it of the King*, and the head of that family can resume it, or pass it on as a life title to any other family. Whenever the title is conferred either on the proper heir to it or on the life buyer of it, the King always receives a large present from the recipient. It is one of the sources of his income. This custom apparently applies only to certain titles of which there can only be one holder at any given time.

The title that belonged to Satu's family was Katendi,¹ and as Satu's brother was too poor to take the title when it fell to him, he had sold a life interest in it to a more wealthy neighbouring chief.

Satu was now ambitious to resume the title, so he sent an embassy to request the King to confer the title on him, and to commission the proper court officer to act as his delegate. Satu sent as a present to the King twenty pieces of very good cloth containing twelve yards each, three goats, one large pig, and four barrels of gunpowder.² Old Plaited-Beard, who was a man of importance in our town, was deputed to give the various articles to his majesty, and ten men and

¹ *Katendi Katendwa nzala o makanda mamene*, i. e. Katendi's finger-nails must not be cut, or his clan will die out : in other words, he must fight to the last, and not submit to humiliations.

² The whole present was worth about £10 at that time.

lads accompanied him to carry and guard the goods.

After a few days' journey we arrived at Congo dia Ngunga, which is situated on a broad plateau some 450 feet above the surrounding country. Along one side of the hill winds the Mposo river, on two other sides the hill falls abruptly to wide valleys, and the fourth side undulates gradually down to the town, where we spent our last night on the road and where we "dressed" for our entry into the King's town.

We arrived about the middle of the morning, and Old Plaited-Beard sent at once to beg for an audience with the King. He replied that we might come in the afternoon, for he undoubtedly heard from the messenger what a fine present we were bringing him.

While we were waiting for the call to the King's house, the elders of our party rested in a hut belonging to one of the King's head men, and exchanged the gossip of the country with him; but Bakula paid a visit to his friend the white man, who had a station there, and was very cordially welcomed by him.

Bakula was shown over the house, the school, the medicine-store and other places, and made to feel perfectly at home. He visited the boys' house, and quickly struck up an acquaintance with

two or three lads. He asked them innumerable questions, pried into every possible nook and corner, and finally concluded that Tonzeka was right and Old Plaited-Beard wrong. Before hurrying back to his party he bade good-bye to the white man, and was asked to come and spend a day or two with him when his business with the King was completed. This he readily promised to do.

About the middle of the afternoon a messenger called us to the King. Bakula at once picked up the twenty pieces of cloth, which were wrapped in a blanket, and followed Old Plaited-Beard, who strutted grandly in front filled with an enormous sense of his own importance. The others came on behind, and the goats and the pig brought up the rear.

We made our way towards the middle of the town, where the King's *lumbu*, or enclosure, was situated. We passed between fences to the "judging place," or *mbaji a Kongo*, in the centre of the town, where a huge, wide-spreading tree stood, beneath the shadows of which all important palavers were held. Crossing this "town square," we came to the first entrance of the King's *lumbu*, which was a miniature maze, as we had to negotiate four fences before arriving at the central space where the King's house stood.

On entering the first opening, we turned to the left, then right, then right again, and found another opening in the fence; then by turning again to the right we worked our way back to a position near the first opening, where we found the third opening in the third fence, then turning to the left and again to the right, there was the opening leading into the courtyard immediately in front of the King's house. There we waited and sent the messenger to tell the King we had reached the last entrance.

After standing there a short time we received permission to advance, and found ourselves in an open space about fifteen by twenty yards in extent, with the front door of the "palace" before us. Old Plaited-Beard and those who were unencumbered with the presents fell upon their knees, stretched their bodies forward in a profound bow, put their palms together, rubbed their little fingers in the dust, which they smeared on their foreheads and temples, and then clapped their hands three times—not by hitting the palms together, but by arching their hands.

After this obeisance they arose to their feet and walked to the front of the house, where they fell again on their knees and repeated the former ceremony of homage. Again rising they entered the house, and advancing to within two or three

yards of the King they fell on their knees and performed the third and last act of their homage.

The King showed his acceptance of the homage by putting the palms of his hands across each other in such a way that the fingers of the right hand were placed well above the thumb and index finger of the left, and he waved the extended fingers up and down. If the King had not received our homage thus, but had thrust out his foot and wriggled his toes, the sooner we had retreated from his presence and returned to our town the better it would have been for us. It would have been a sign that the King was angry with us, wished to insult us, and was meditating mischief.

As native houses go the King's "palace" was large, being about eighteen feet wide by twenty-five feet long. The walls were of planks, and the roof of grass. Along one wall was a high, wide shelf covered with ewers, basins, decanters, china images of dogs, men, and women gaudily coloured, jugs, plates, and common vases—the profits of trading and presents from chiefs and others. Beneath the shelf were various trunks, undoubtedly full of trade cloth and other treasures.

I afterwards heard that the King's bedroom was next to the one we were in, and beyond that the houses for his twenty-five wives.

We found the King sitting on a low seat covered with blankets, rugs and pillows. His full title was Dom Pedro V, Ntotela, Ntinu a Kongo, *i. e.* Dom Pedro V, Emperor, King of Congo. His personal name was Elelo, and I afterwards learned that his sobriquet was: Weni w'ezulu, or, The Great One of Heaven.

The King received us very graciously and inquired about Satu and the town, about trade and the number of people. Old Plaited-Beard answered cautiously, for it was not wise to give too much information to his majesty. He then told the King that Satu wished to have conferred on him his family title of Katendi, which his uncle had bought some years previously of his majesty. Then without waiting for an answer, our leader beckoned Bakula to come forward with the present. With considerable nervousness my owner stepped into the space before the King, fell on his knees and paid homage as he had seen the others do, and, removing the covering, he presented, on his knees, the cloth piece by piece to the august personage, who counted the pieces, felt the texture and commented with satisfaction on the weight and quality of each piece.

The powder, pig and goats were next presented, and he was asked with proper expressions of humility to accept the "poor gift." This he

138 Bakula accompanies an Embassy

deigned to do, and promised that on a certain day he would send his Kapitau to install Satu officially in his title of Katendi.

We then retired backward out of the house, kneeling and paying homage at the right places, and at last found ourselves winding through the maze of fences into the town, well pleased with our reception and impressed with the greatness and dignity of the King.

Soon after our return to our quarters we received a present of some food from the King, and heard that one head man had been instructed to look after our welfare during the visit.

Just before sunset there was a great stir in the town, and Bakula, running in the direction of the noise, was in time to see the King leave his *lumbu*. He was about six feet four inches in height, very stout, being sixty-eight inches¹ round the waist, his face badly pitted with the small-pox, and he was ungainly and awkward in his movements by reason of his obesity. He was dressed in a loin-cloth of many yards of purple velvet, a scarlet waistcoat with bright buttons adorned his capacious stomach, and a general's coat covered his back. On his head was a cockade, and from a belt hung a large and heavy sword, which he removed and handed to one of his men to carry.

¹ See note 32, p. 351.

In the square before his *lumbu* were six of his head men, with a hammock gay with bright-coloured cloths. It was rarely now that the King left his *lumbu*, hence there was a large crowd to witness the unusual sight. It was with difficulty that he mounted his hammock, and it needed the combined strength of the six *doms*, or head men, to support him in it.

Fortunately they had not far to carry him—about 150 yards, and they landed him safely but perspiring at the door of the mission-house, to which Bakula and the crowd followed him.

The white man, who had invited the King to dine with him that evening, received his majesty at the door, and after shaking hands with him and inquiring after his health, led him to a substantial sofa that stood in the corner of the central room.

The crowd stood around the door, for the head men allowed only a few in attendance on the King to enter. To my owner's eyes it was a large dining-room, and from the door one commanded a view of the whole of it.

There in the centre stood a large table with a white cloth spread over it. On each side a place was laid with knives and forks for one person. From the roof a lamp was suspended that threw a light over the whole room and revealed the various things on the table, such as some bread,

biscuits, jugs of water, and a bottle of lime-juice.

The table being already laid, the boys quickly brought from the kitchen some soup, sweet potatoes, native greens, a tin of fish, one boiled fowl, a piece of boiled pork, a sucking pig roasted whole, a rice pudding and some stewed native fruit. A native likes to know what he is expected to eat, and the King could not have read a menu if there had been one. A smile of complacent anticipation covered the King's broad face as his eyes and nose were greeted by the appearance of the roasted sucking pig.

All being ready, the white man invited the King to take his seat at the table. The old man waddled over to the chair, and when he had seated himself, his five favourite wives took up a position on the ground round the back of his chair, while the head men arranged themselves along the wall. The white man took his seat opposite the King, and having said Grace, helped his majesty to soup.

The old man took a few spoonfuls and handed the rest down to his wives, who, with suppressed giggling, finished it. Fish followed, and what the King did not eat he passed on to his wives.

The white man said: "In England when boys

and girls are going to a feast they eat very little during the day, so as to do full justice to the feast provided for them."

"Is that so?" replied the King. "I did not know that was your custom, for," he laughingly continued, "I have eaten nothing all day in order to have plenty of room for your dinner." And the old man chuckled because he was 'cuter than the white boys, for he had eaten *nothing*.

A plate piled with boiled pork, fowl and vegetables was next handed to the visitor. He worked his way through about half of it, and passed down the remainder to his waiting wives, who finished it with gusto.

Then came that roasted sucking pig. Generous slices of it were laid on a plate—no, he did not want vegetables. The meat soon disappeared, and there was nothing but a bone or two this time to hand down to the women.

The white man, sympathizing with their disappointment, asked the King to have some more. Another large portion was placed upon his plate—yes, he would have some vegetables this time. The meat vanished again—it was quite true, the King had eaten nothing surely for a Congo week. The plate was loaded a third time with the tasty pork, and the King was at last beaten, for with a sigh he handed more than half a plateful down

to his expectant wives, among whom it was quickly shared and eaten.

"Would the King have some rice pudding and stewed guavas?" was the next question. A look of reproach passed across his majesty's face, as much as to say: "Why do you have such common things on such an important occasion?" But he was too courteous to give expression to his thoughts, and asked for "a little, very little."

One of the wives, however, lifted her head and formed her mouth into the word "Plenty," and plenty it was that found its way to the King's plate. He toyed with it a few moments, and his wives cleared the remainder.

The feast was over. The white man told his boys to share the remnants with the head men and the King's wives, "for it is not every day that the King dines with us," and to clear the table as quickly as possible.

While the boys were busy clearing away in a double sense, the King informed his host of the prowess of his early years, when he was lithe and active, and was feared throughout all the district for his fighting qualities. It was then that he won the nickname of Weni w'ezulu, *i. e.* the Great One of Heaven.

No sooner were the remains of the feast removed than the white man put a black thing on

the table and lit it. It was a magic lantern. A white sheet was lowered from the roof, and the light from the lantern turned upon it, while the lamp that illuminated the room was put out.

This caused the King to express some nervous fears, but a few quiet words from the white man pacified him. It appeared that the white man had often given lantern exhibitions in the open air, because there was no building large enough to contain the crowds that came to see the wonderful pictures; and as the sheet was put for convenience of erection over the front of one of the houses, and the breezes caused the sheet to gently move, the natives said: "The spirits came out of the house and moved about on the sheet."

The King had heard of these suspicious rumours, and as he could not mingle with the crowds, he had asked the white man for a show all to himself. Hence the invitation to dinner and the magic lantern display.

Before exhibiting the pictures the white man referred to this silly talk, and excused it because the people did not know any better. He raised the sheet and showed the King the solid stone wall, explained the working of the lantern, gave the King one of the slides, and told him how the picture was thrown by the strong light on to the sheet.

After much persuasion the King put his fingers in front of the lens and saw them magnified on the sheet. He snapped his fingers and saw the movements imitated and enlarged, and at last was quite sure there was no wickedness or witchcraft about the whole affair.

The white man now threw some pictures of London on the sheet and explained them, and they needed a lot of explanation. The tall houses—room above room; the Queen's palace and her soldiers; the big houses where the judges sat day after day—"It must be a wicked country where so many judges have to hear cases every day"; the horses and vehicles, and the people—"The people! Why, they are as numerous in your roads as driver-ants!"¹

The white man then showed a few pictures of the life of Christ, and with a few words of prayer brought the visit to a close.

The King, somewhat solemnized by what he had last seen and heard, thanked the white man for the dinner and the pictures, and, getting into his hammock, was carried by his six stalwart head men back to his house.

Bakula, my owner, had received, by permission of the white man, an invitation from one of the elder school lads to sleep in the mission dormitory.

¹ See note 33, p. 351.

Consequently, after the King's departure, he made his way to the boys' house and was vociferously greeted by his new friends, some of whom were with the white man when he was driven from Satu's town. The house he entered was about twenty feet long by fifteen feet wide. It possessed several luxuries, such as a door and windows that moved on hinges, an oil lantern hanging from the roof, and beds raised about two feet above the ground.

Bakula had been greatly impressed by his visit to the King, of whom he had heard much, but had never seen until that day. After the first greetings were over he began to ply his new friends with many questions about the King, and as a son and a nephew of the King were among the school-lads, he had his curiosity more than satisfied by what he was able to learn from them. He was told that many chiefs sent their sons to be brought up at the court of the King, and thus they were able to learn the ceremonies of the court etiquette in receiving visitors, and how to settle palavers. These lads waited on the King, were his errand boys on small occasions, and finished the food he left after they had served him at table.

Attached to the King's court were several functionaries, as follows: *Kapitan* was a noble

whose function it was to confer titles on others as the representative of the King, who, being too old and obese to travel with comfort the long, hilly roads, sent this officer in his stead, as the chiefs could only be ennobled in their own towns.

Nelumbu was the title of another court officer, who was supposed never to leave the King's *lumbu*, or enclosure. He was a kind of master of ceremonies, or a chamberlain, and instructed the ignorant how to approach the King. After him came *Nempangu*, who carried the staff of the King (from *mpangu*, staff). This officer went on embassies for his master to chiefs and towns, taking the King's staff with him as a token of his authority, and a proof that he had come from the King. Then there was *Nembila* (from *mbila*, summons, call), who was the King's messenger, and was sent to summon chiefs and others to the King's presence and to inform the people of his majesty's wishes and commands. *Nejinguzioka* (or "one who walks about") was an officer who always stayed by the King, to wait on him and carry out those important orders that could not be entrusted to the lads or pages who served the King. *Neloto* (from *loto*, spoon) was lowest in rank about the court, and was simply the spoon-bearer—probably a taster of the food before it was given to his master.

Attached to the court, but outside of it, was a head man, whose special duty it was to assess the tax on all trading caravans travelling through the town or passing through the near district. He was also to some extent responsible for the safe-conduct of caravans through that part of the country of which the King was overlord. Of course the larger portion of the amounts in kind received found their way to the King, otherwise his life would have been of little worth. And, lastly, there was *Nemfilantu* (from *fila ntu*, to place the head), the noble best liked by the King, the most trusted of his councillors, the one in whose "lap he could rest his head."

During his stay in the King's town Bakula had all these high personages shown to him. It was necessary to have them pointed out, as on ordinary occasions they were dressed worse¹ than slaves and dependants, so as to avoid arousing envy, jealousy, and accusations of witchcraft.

¹ See note 34, p. 352.

Chapter XIV

Bakula stays with the White Man

The working of a mission station—Buying food—The school—Bakula is afraid to enter the school—Repairing the station—Boys work in the gardens—A quarrel, and how it was settled—An evening's chat with the white man—Rubbing evil spirits out of a man—Sunday service—Congregation—Sermon—Visit to a near town—Religious talk with the King—Boys pray for their white teacher—Witch-doctor's trick exposed.

NEXT morning, at sunrise, Bakula was aroused by the sonorous tones of a large bell, and running out of the house he found the white man pacing slowly up and down the yard of the mission station, waiting for the workmen to arrive. Bakula greeted his friend with a smile, and an inquiry as to whether he had "slept well,"¹ and then stood on one side to observe all that happened. Soon the workmen came, rubbing the sleep out of their eyes, and the white man, checking them by his note-book, sent some to cut and carry in bundles of thatching-grass, others for fence sticks, and others for posts; three were sent for papyrus² reeds from which to make native

¹ See note 35, p. 352.

² See note 36, p. 352.

string for repairing the fences running round the mission ground, and some were set to work on the station.

Having started the men at their work, the white man sat down to his breakfast. It was not like the dinner to which the King had been invited, for it consisted of porridge, coffee, roasted plantain¹ and eggs. During this time women and men were gathering with various articles for sale, and as soon as the white man had finished his breakfast he went out to barter for the different articles he needed. Women with large baskets of *mfumfu*, or cassava flour, and peanuts went with their goods to the door of a store directly the price was agreed upon. Eggs were tested, and a string of a hundred blue pipe beads (worth a farthing) was paid for each, fowls were bought at from ten to twenty strings of beads each, according to size. Yams, sweet potatoes, greens, and small native tomatoes were also purchased with either the ordinary blue beads, which were the currency, or with red, olive, opal or any other coloured beads that happened to be in stock and took the fancy of the seller. Men with bamboos, mats, and planks bartered them for different kinds of trade cloth; and those with goats sold them for cloth, blankets, knives, cast-off soldiers' coats, or large,

¹ See note 37, p. 352.

bright-coloured handkerchiefs. Then the white man hurried over to the store, measured out the cassava flour and peanuts, and paid the women according to quantity.

On our markets a great amount of time is wasted by haggling over prices—the seller asking a ridiculous sum at first, and gradually bringing it down to a half or third of the original demand. But I noticed that the white man looked keenly at the article for sale, asked the price, carefully considered for a few moments and then stated the amount he would give, and the vender either assented to it at once, or picked up his goods and left.

There was one man, a stranger, who had a goat for sale. The white man examined it.

“How much?” he asked.

“Twenty-four fathoms of cloth,” replied the man.

The white man whistled, smiled, and said: “I will give you nine fathoms for it, and that is a fair price.”

“Give me twenty fathoms. I can get that on the market,” avowed the man.

“Take it to the market, then,” advised the white man. “Let me see,” he continued, “to-day is Nkenge market. You will not have far to go.” And with that he walked on to the next.

A man standing by said to the goat-seller : " If you stay here all day he won't change his price. He has only 'one mouth.' On the market you may get seven fathoms for the goat, but not more. You should accept the offer."

He wisely acted on the advice, received his nine fathoms, and went away with a truer conception of white men's knowledge of the prices of native goods, and delighted that he had sold his goat before the sun was very high in the sky.

Just now I heard the big bell ring, and shortly after it was again rung loudly, and the boys on the station and others from various parts of the town went hurrying by into the school-house—a long building of mats, posts, and thatch, built along one side of the courtyard. There were about sixty boys of various ages present when the white man entered. He led them in the singing of a hymn, talked to them a short time about God's palaver, and then they all bowed their heads in prayer.

After this he called out the names of the boys from his book, and divided them into four lots : one group he set to write in books, another received slates and pencils and wrote down and worked the sums that were written on a black-board, another set of boys sat round their white teacher and read from books, and over in the

corner was a class being taught their letters by a native teacher.

Bakula was asked by the white man to enter the school, but my owner was too fearful of what might happen to him—if he did—to accept the invitation, and at the same time was so interested in all that he saw and heard that he could not drag himself away from the door. He asked and received permission to remain at his place of observation.

At intervals the white man walked round the station to see that the workmen had not gone to sleep, or over to some young men who were learning carpentry under the verandah of his house, and needed some further instruction. Occasionally men came to the door of the school to talk with the white man on matters of business or to seek his advice on native palavers.

About the middle of the morning the white man gave a sign, and the boys left the school helter-skelter for a short time of play. Hockey-sticks were quickly brought out, and the station resounded with peals of laughter and the shouts of those at play. Another sign and the boys skurried back to the school-house, and were soon engaged in other lessons. During the second school the white teacher gave a short talk on physiology, and the boys listened to it with much

attention, and asked many questions. It surprised them to hear the number of bones in their body, and the wonderful way in which they were made.

I noticed that the teacher spoke of the foolishness of believing that witchcraft could affect the body, and showed how the witch-doctors tricked, deceived and robbed them. They sang another hymn, and repeated together what I afterwards learned to be the Lord's Prayer, and the school was concluded. The midday bell rang, the workmen stopped work, the boys went to their house or to the town, and the white man had his dinner and rested during the heat of the day.

In due time (2 p.m.) the bell sounded, and Bakula, full of curiosity and interest, went to see what next the white man would do. He found him standing at the door telling the workmen to continue with the repairs of the fence, and allotting to the boys their work in the garden. At this time about twenty boys lived on the station, some of whom came from distant towns. All of them had their own work allotted to them: thus two boys swept, cleaned, and did all the necessary work in the white man's house; one boy did the washing and ironing, another did the cooking; one boy fetched firewood and water for the cook-house; two boys looked after the goats, cut grass

and fed them in the dry season; and one boy fetched the water for the house from the beautiful spring that gurgled out of the ground half-way down the hill-side. The rest of the boys worked on the garden.

Bakula could understand boys working about the house, kitchen, and goats of the white man; but he could not understand boys working on the land like women and girls; and when he went to look at them, and found them digging with hoes, he asked: "Why do you do this woman's work? Are you girls?"

"No," they answered, "we are not girls. At one time we refused to work in the garden, and told the white man that this kind of work was only fit for women; but he came and worked with us day after day, and we thought that the work a white man was not ashamed to do we black boys should not be ashamed of. Since then we have worked as you see us."

Bakula returned to the courtyard, and found the white man very busy dressing sores, and dispensing medicine to the sick, after which he accompanied him on a visit to various patients about the town who were too ill to come to the dispensary. The rest of the afternoon the white man spent with the carpenter lads, by whose aid he was building a large store.

By sunset the white man looked fagged, and I think it was with a sigh of relief that he drove the last nail for the day, and gave the order to ring the stop-work bell. Just then loud shouts were heard, angry, passionate words came on the air, and the white man, hurrying in the direction of the sounds, found a big boy fighting a small one. He instantly separated them, and turning on the big fellow upbraided him for cowardice in striking a little boy, and charged him with breaking one of the station laws in hitting one smaller than himself.

"He cursed me and was insolent," aggressively answered the law-breaker in defence of his action.

"Yes, I dare say he was cheeky," said the judge; "but you know the rule of this place is: All big boys that hit little boys must be punished with the cane, and all small boys who curse and are insolent to their elders must be brought to the white man for him to cane. There is only one who punishes on this station, and that is myself. Is it not so?"

"Yes, that is the law," they unanimously assented.

"I have told you repeatedly," continued the white man, "that without such a rule you cannot live happily here. The big ones among you would constantly harry and make drudges of the

little ones, and their lives would become unbearable; and the younger ones, too, would irritate you older ones with their curses and impudence. It is a good law, is it not?"

"Yes, it is a good law," they all agreed.

Thereupon the white man picked up a cane, and gave the law-breaker six good strokes with it on his hands, and turning to the small boy, he said: "If you get cursing or cheeking the other lads I will give you a thrashing that you will not quickly forget."

The boys trooped off to their house. And Bakula, as he accompanied the lads, was surprised to hear no angry exclamations against the white man. The majority acknowledged the rule to be a good one, and that the white man was absolutely impartial in enforcing it.

During the evening my owner, together with eight or ten other lads, went to have a chat with their white man. On entering his house we found him reading a book and eating roasted peanuts. His evening meal was over, and he was just reading and resting. On our arrival he smiled, and putting down his book, at once began to chat with us. There had been a discussion in the boys' house as to which was the greatest country: Portugal, Holland, or England,¹ and as the sup-

¹ See note 38, p. 353.

porters of each were about equally divided they had come to the white man to settle the palaver for them. He listened to our questions, and taking down one of his books, told us the size of each country, the number of people in each, and the different kinds of articles made in each place. He then told us a story he had just read, and asked us to tell him one of our stories, which the oldest lad amongst us at once did, to our amusement. It was now late, but before wishing our white friend "to sleep well," we all knelt in prayer and thanked the great God for His goodness, and especially for the loving gift of His Son Jesus Christ.

The next day was Saturday, so the boys swept up the courtyard, and all the various paths about the station, those also leading to the station and the "town square." Bakula entered heartily into the work of tidying up the place, and by midday all the rubbish had been carried away and burnt. The boys had the rest of the day for themselves—some visited friends in the neighbourhood, others played hockey, one group went off to the forest in search of wild fruits, and another went rat-hunting in the farms and bush.

While Bakula was walking this afternoon through the town he saw a man stretched on a

158 Bakula stays with the White Man

mat with a fowl tied to his leg, and a witch-doctor vigorously rubbing him. He was a sick man, and the "medicine man" had told him to bring a fowl before he could attempt to cure him. The fowl had been brought and a string had been tied from a leg of the fowl to a leg of the outstretched patient.

The witch-doctor was now kneeling by the side of the sick man, rubbing the evil spirit out of his arms into his body; then he chased it out of the body over towards the leg to which the fowl was tied; he thereupon worked it out of the other leg into that to which the fowl was connected by the string, and thus he followed it until he had cornered it near to the string, when suddenly he gave a tremendous push and away it went through the rest of the leg and through the string into the fowl. The witch-doctor cut the connecting string, wrung the neck of the fowl, and threw it over to his wife to cook for his next meal, for he was not afraid of any number of evil spirits that might be in the fowl. The practice was that if a patient did not recover after this rubbing out of the malignant spirits, he had to take another and another fowl until he was either cured or his fowls were finished.

There was no bell at sunrise the next morning calling the men to work; but before the sun was

far above the distant tree-tops a bugle sounded out over the town.

"What is that?" asked Bakula of a companion, for he had never heard a bugle before.

"To-day is Sunday," his friend replied, "and that is Petelo blowing his bugle to remind the people that it is the rest day, and those who want to attend the service to hear God's palaver must not go to the farms."

"I know what God's palaver means," said Bakula. "But what do Sunday and service mean? I never heard of them before."

His informant explained the meaning of the day, and also of the word service. He said that ever since the white teachers had come to live in their town many of the folk observed the day and attended the service, but others laughed at both and went off to their farms as usual.

By and by my owner went with the other lads to the school-house, where we found some boys from the town already assembled. The white man came in and greeted us, sat down among us and conducted what I afterwards learned was a Sunday-school class. He talked to us about God's mercy and justice, and we asked him all kinds of questions. If we started any inquiry that did not belong to the lesson he told us to remind him of it one evening when we went for

a chat with him and he would try to answer it then.

When the sun was well up the bell was rung for God's palaver. All the boys picked up two or three mats and carried them to the "town square," where they spread them along three sides and placed two of them in the middle. These preparations being completed, the bell was again loudly rung, and the white man, locking up his house, went to the square, followed by a boy carrying his chair.

By this time the people had gathered—the women and girls sat on the mats along one side, the men and boys on the mats extending along two sides. The school-boys arranged themselves on the mats that had been put in the middle, against which the white man's chair had been placed, and finally the King sat on a chair with a few head men about him at the entrance to his *lumbu*, or enclosure, which occupied the whole of the fourth side. He was gorgeously arrayed in a bright red coat and waistcoat, with a large, bright blue cloth round his loins and a gaudy smoking-cap on his head. Most of the people were dressed in gay-coloured cloths and bright beads, and had oily faces. Here and there were young dandies who, to enhance their charms, had polished their faces with black lead, or streaked

them with lines of scarlet, blue, or yellow pigments.

It was a strange, grotesque, pathetic gathering upon which the eyes of the pale-face teacher rested that radiant Sunday morning. The faces of the old women portrayed their greed, jealousy, hatred and vice. From the very youngest girl to the oldest woman there was not a pure, virgin soul to be found. Among the older men there was not one but had broken the whole ten commandments, and the younger men and boys who had not broken them all had failed not from lack of inclination, but of opportunities. There at the back sat in scarlet and blue the man who had murdered the very mother who had nursed him and cared for him in infancy and childhood. What message had the teacher for these men and women?

The white man gave out a hymn, and the school-boys sang it heartily. Bakula recognized it as the one he heard in Tonzeka's town on the night of the drunken riot—"God loved the world of sinners lost."

Then a strange thing happened: the teacher knelt in prayer, and the men and women, boys and girls turned over from their squatting postures on the mats, and bowed their heads while in reverent tones they repeated the prayers phrase

by phrase—a confession of guilt, a petition for strength to do right, a note of thankfulness for God's mercy, and for His great gift of Jesus Christ, and a request that they might all receive His pardon and salvation. Then came another hymn, and the white man spoke to us on God's readiness to forgive, if we will but repent and turn to Him, and he illustrated what he meant by telling us a story out of God's book called "The Prodigal Son." Another hymn and prayer and the strange meeting was over. The teacher went and spoke to the King and greeted all whom he passed on his way to his empty house.

Soon after dinner the white man called three or four of his boys, and, taking his long walking-stick, started for Mputu, to hold a service in that town. Bakula met the little party and received permission to join it.

Passing through the town, we descended a steep side of the hill, and came to the river Mposo, which we crossed by means of a rickety bridge, and a long walk up and down low-lying hills brought us to Mbumba's town of Mputu. Apparently the white man was expected, for the folk gathered before the greetings between the chief and the teacher were concluded.

A service was conducted similar to the morning one, the chief and people joining in the hymns

and prayer, and listening attentively to God's palaver. The sun by now was fast sinking, so the white man bade the chief and his people good-bye and hurried back to Congo dia Ngunga. On the way out our white companion had chatted freely with us, but now he asked us not to talk to him, as he had to think over what teaching he should give the King on his return.

In our small party was a lad belonging to the town we had just left, so Bakula asked him if all the rumours of cruelty and murder he had heard about Mbumba were true, for he was notorious throughout the whole district for cutting off ears on the slightest provocation, murdering folk for the smallest offences, and stirring up quarrels and war between towns for the most trivial causes. "Yes," admitted the lad, "it is all true. He cut off my brother's ear, because, while sitting in front of him one day, he happened to stretch out his legs;¹ and I was present on another occasion when he ordered a slave to be killed for the same small offence."

Mbumbu's record was that of one "whose feet were swift to shed blood." He had listened quietly to the teaching that afternoon, and had begged the teacher to "come again quickly."

It was almost sunset by the time we had

¹ See note 39, p. 353.

climbed the hill and reached the town. On arriving at the entrance to the King's enclosure the white man turned in, we following at his heels. The King, hearing us, called to us to enter without ceremony, and we found his majesty squatting on a low stool with an empty chair opposite him. He shook hands cordially with the white man and, pointing to the chair, invited him to be seated. And sitting there face to face, with only a few boys about them, the white man said—

“The white teachers who first came to live in your town visited you every Sunday evening to explain God's palaver to you, and for many months now I have been coming, when well, every Sunday evening for the same purpose. What is it that keeps your heart closed so tightly against our message?” Then he pleaded with him to repent of his many great sins and seek help and salvation in God. The shadows deepened as the conversation proceeded, but it was not too dark to see the tears trickling down the pock-marked cheeks of the old man.

At last the quiet talk was ended, and the white man, promising to see him again soon, bade the King “sleep well,” and returned to the lonely stone house that echoed with the voices of those who had lived and worked there before him.

Soon after dark the white man's personal boy came and informed us that his master had taken some tea and gone to bed with a bad fever, and he had sent to say that he could not talk with any of the lads that night, and begged them not to make much noise, as his head ached severely. A quietness fell upon us all, and although the stone house was some distance off, the boys spoke in whispers for fear of disturbing their teacher. When the light was put out that night, one of the elder boys timidly suggested we might pray to God on behalf of their teacher. As no one dissented he falteringly prayed : " O God, we do not know much about you, for we are foolish and do not learn quickly what our white man tells us about you ; but we beg you to cure him of his fever, so that he may teach us every day. O God, take a sharp hoe, dig into our hearts, pull up all the weeds and sow Thy good seed there. In the name of Jesus we beg it. Amen."

Two or three days after the above events Bakula heard some shouting in the town, and hurried in the direction of the voices. There, in the centre of a crowd, was a witch-doctor, dancing and prancing about in the most ridiculous, though approved, fashion.

In his hand was a bunch of feathers, which he flourished in the air and then darted at the grass

wall of a hut near by. Every time he threw it the bunch of feathers stuck in the wall, and everybody shouted with admiration because they thought it was a great charm, as otherwise simple feathers would not fly with such accuracy and stick tightly on a wall. The witch-doctor danced in triumph, and the crowd of onlookers shouted and clapped.

Again the feathers are thrown, and, wonder of wonders, they stick; but before the witch-doctor has finished his fandango of exultation, a school-lad darts from the crowd and, grasping the feathers, he drags them from the wall.

A scream of horror arises from the men and women, for they expect him to fall dead or paralyzed on the ground as a punishment for touching another's fetish.

But, no, there he stands nervously pulling at the feathers; and before the witch-doctor can reach him he extracts from amid the feathers a sharp iron prong, and throws it and the feathers at the feet of their maddened owner.

Then the people see the trick that has been played upon them and, turning on the witch-doctor, drive him from the town amid hooting, hisses and laughter.

A SCENE IN THE CATARACT REGION OF THE CONGO.

A WITCH DOCTOR

Chapter XV

Satu receives a Title

The King sends for medicine—He is told to apply to St. Catherine—The King's promise—Bakula bids farewell to his white friend—King's deputy goes with us to Satu's town—Ceremony of conferring the title—Killing a leopard—Satu redeems his brother—Releases his niece from a hateful marriage—A story : "Appearances are sometimes Deceptive"—A chief asks for Satu's niece in marriage—Marriage money is paid—The wedding—Satu gains a new slave.

ONE day Bakula was chatting with the white man in his house when a head man arrived from his majesty, saying : "The King has many pains in his stomach, and he wants some medicine to stop them. Will you send some?"

"No," replied the white man, "I will not send him any. For several weeks I attended the King during his severe illness, and immediately on his recovery he, at the request of the padres, went to their church and thanked St. Catherine for his restoration to health. Go and tell him that as he thanked St. Catherine for his recovery, he must now ask St. Catherine for medicine to stop the pains in his stomach."

The messenger could hardly repress a smile as

he said : " That is only fair," and hurried off to deliver his message.

" Will you not send some medicine ? " asked the King's nephew, who was standing by.

" Yes, perhaps by and by, but not just yet," replied the white man. " He has eaten too much, and colic is the result. It will not hurt him to bear the gripings for a time; and then I will send him some medicine and advice. You know," continued the speaker, " that I went at sunrise every morning for five weeks to wash his foul, sloughing sore, and bind it in clean bandages; and he was grateful for all that was done for him, and often said that I had saved his life, and now I want to teach him that these saints who have rotted away to dust generations ago cannot help him."

By now the messenger returned to say that the King will not go to St. Catherine again if the white man will send him some medicine at once.

To him the missionary replied : " Tell the King he had better wait a little longer before making such a conditional promise. St. Catherine may be busy somewhere else, and cannot come to Congo just now, even for a King. You see, she must have a lot to do in all parts of the world, and as she is only a saint, and not God, she cannot be everywhere at once."

Off went the man with the message, and this time he could not suppress his laughter.

"Tell the cook-boy to make some hot water quickly," said the white man to a boy who was squatting near the door.

The King's nephew, in apologetic tones, said : "The King's position is a very difficult one. He loves Vianga, Yoani, Bentele, Alli¹ and you very much. You English were the first to bring God's palaver to him and his people, every day you cure them of their diseases with your medicines, and you teach them all kinds of good ways; but the padres give him bales and bales of cloth and many boxes of beads. You know he is always greedy for trade goods and fine clothes; and these he receives in abundance from the Roman Catholic padres, hence when they asked him to go to their church to thank St. Catherine for his recovery, he was afraid to refuse them, although he believes in his heart what you frequently told him: that God blessed your medicine to his restoration. To show how he loves you English teachers, listen to what happened about a month ago. All the padres went to the King and told him that he was to order all his people to attend their church, and never again to go to your

¹ Revs. T. J. Comber, John Hartland, W. H. Bentley, and H. E. Crudgington.

services. They were angry because their church was nearly empty every Sunday. They threatened to leave the town immediately, and that would mean a stoppage of all their presents, if he did not issue the order they requested. The King absolutely refused to command his people to attend either service, and said: 'They shall be free to go wherever they like.'

"I have always felt sorry for the trying position of the King," said the white man, "and fully sympathize with him in his difficulties; but he is, as we say in English, trying to sit on two stools, and that is always very uncomfortable to the sitter, and most irritating to the stools."

Just then three head men came hurrying into the house to beg again for some medicine, and to promise on behalf of the King that he would never again thank St. Catherine for what she did not, and could not accomplish. So the white man called for the hot water, and, mixing a glass of physic, sent it to the King.

In a short time the man returned with the report that the King felt better directly he drank the medicine.

"What was it you gave him?" he asked of the white man.

"Only some peppermint, hot water and sugar," replied the missionary. "You tell the King from

me," he continued, "that he is not to eat so much."

Bakula informed his white friend that he had come to bid him good-bye, for at "cock-crow" in the morning he and his party would be starting back for their town.

"Will you not come and live with me, and let me teach you God's palaver?" asked the white man of the lad.

"For many reasons," replied Bakula, "I would like to come and learn to read, write, do carpentry and hear more about God; but this station is a long way from my home, and my family will not let me come so far. My uncle lives in the Ngombe district, and perhaps they will let me go to the mission school there."

"Well, you can learn there as well as here; but I should have liked you to live with me," and there was a note of tenderness in the teacher's voice, and tears were not far from his eyes as he spoke to the lad. And after a quiet talk with my owner about what he had heard at the services, and expressing the hope that they would see each other again soon, the white man and Bakula separated, never to meet again on earth.

Bakula had frequently tried to induce Old Plaited-Beard to have some conversation with the white man, but had failed every time, not through

lack of earnestness and persistency on Bakula's part; but because of the old man's superstitious fear and hatred of white men. The discussions on the subject had been long and often loud, and when Old Plaited-Beard was unsuccessful in proving his charges of witchcraft against the white man, or failed in proving that the white man bought up dead bodies and sent them to Mputu, he then fell back on another accusation: that the white men had come to steal their country from them.

On one occasion Bakula led the white man towards the place where Old Plaited-Beard was sitting; but no sooner did the superstitious old man see him coming in the distance than he ran into the inner room of the nearest house, and would not come out until he was assured that the white man had gone.

Early next morning Bakula and his party, accompanied by Kapitau and some followers, started on their return journey. On the road Old Plaited-Beard and the Kapitau had long talks, and although the prejudiced views of the old man were received with coldness by the King's deputy, yet in one point they agreed, and that was "that the white man would rob them of their country and make them all slaves."¹

¹ See note 40, p. 353.

Wherever we stayed for a night the people paid most humble homage to Kapitau, as representing the King, and supplied him with plenty of food and palm-wine; consequently every evening was spent in feasting and drinking, and there was scarcely a night that the elders of the party went to bed sober.

On arriving at Satu's town Kapitau and his companions received a great ovation. The people crowded the road to set eyes on the man who had been sent by the great King of Congo to confer a title on their own chief. They vied with each other in shouting, clapping, and beating their mouths. Drums were thumped, ivory horns blown, and guns fired; and the din was such that it seemed more like pandemonium let loose for a riot than a friendly welcome to an honoured visitor and guest. To show due respect to the King's deputy a good house was given him, and an abundant supply of food. In two or three days the party was rested and the necessary preparations for the ceremony were completed.

On the appointed day a large crowd gathered, composed of Satu's mother's clan, who were especially called. Those members of his father's clan who desired to be present were welcomed, but all other clans were carefully excluded. The assembly formed a large circle, in the centre of

which a leopard's skin was spread and a seat placed on it.

The Kapitau went up to Satu, who was sitting among his people, and hooking his index finger in the little finger of Satu's left hand, led him up to the leopard's skin, and walking him round it as far as the tail, told him to step over it. Then, leading him to the front of the chair, he seated him in it, whereupon the crowd of onlookers slapped the loosely closed fists of their left hands with the palms of their right hands.

The Kapitau put on the new noble's head some *lemba-lemba* leaves, and wetting his hands with palm-wine, pressed them to Satu's temples, to the back and front of his head, to his shoulders and to his knees. This was to make him throb with life, wise in the head, strong in body and legs. This ceremony was repeated three times, and a blessing was pronounced in the following words: May you be happy and lucky, and when you speak may your words be heard (*i. e.* obeyed) by the people. And again the crowd shouted and clapped.

When the folk had exhausted themselves into quietness the Kapitau asked loudly three times: "Do you know this man's name?" and the people replied each time: "No, we do not know his name!" Then the King's deputy exclaimed

loudly: "It is *Ngudi a nkama Katendi*." The men and women, hearing this, rounded their mouths with pursed lips, and beat them with the extended fingers of their right hands, making thereby a long series of *Wo! Wo! Wo!* and again the drums were beaten, guns fired, and ivory trumpets sounded until the very air seemed to quiver with discordant noises.

The Kapitau then instructed the new noble how he was to deport himself as a man of high rank. In future he must not, when walking, visiting, hunting or trading, carry anything except his walking-stick or gun. In fact, he was never again to carry anything like a boy or an ordinary man. Should any person meet him bearing any article, save his stick or gun, such a person may take away the said article and either keep it for himself or sell it. Should he shoot any game he must send some one for it, for if he attempted to bring it into the town himself, the first to meet him may deprive him of his spoils. He must never, under any circumstances, gather firewood or fetch water; and, lastly, the new noble must never beat his wives, and should he so far forget himself as to do so, he may be mulcted in a fine of several fowls or one goat. These instructions completed, a bracelet was put on his arm as a sign of his new and important rank.

Satu gave the Kapitau four pieces of cloth and a pig to compensate him for his trouble; and a great feast of pigs, goats and palm-wine was prepared for the people in honour of the occasion. The night was occupied with gluttony, dancing, immorality and drunkenness, for men and women, boys and girls were reeling about in maudlin intoxication all over the town. Fortunately they had nothing but palm-wine to drink, which never makes the drinkers quarrelsome, like the fiery waters supplied by traders.

Only chiefs are permitted to own and use leopards' skins, and when one of these animals is slain there is considerable local excitement as to which chief will gain possession of the skin by his largesse to the fortunate slayer of the brute.

The other week a leopard was killed in our neighbourhood, and the lucky man who shot it had it carried from chief to chief in the district. The front and back paws were tied, and a pole was passed through the legs and hoisted on to the shoulders of some men. In this ignominious fashion—dangling from a pole—the prize was hawked from place to place. One chief gave four kegs of gunpowder (worth 16s.); another gave seven blankets (worth 21s.); another, who already owned a leopard skin, and could not afford a second, presented eight looking-glasses (worth

5s.); and thus each gave, not knowing what the others had given. Satu gave four blankets, three kegs of powder, and two rugs (worth in all 30s.), and thus exceeded the others in generous presents. Directly it was known who gave the largest sum to the leopard slayer, Satu went and put his foot on the beast, and thus established his claim to it. The animal was removed and in due time skinned. It could not be flayed until it was trodden on by its future owner.

The leopard after it is killed is always referred to with great respect as *Mfummu*, or chief; and after the carcass has made the circuit of the chiefs it is carried back to the hunter's town, and two or three days are given wholly to festivities. Guns are fired, drums are beaten, the people dance and sing songs in honour of the slayer of *Mfummu*, and much palm-wine is drunk. The leopard is then flayed and eaten. Some ate the flesh believing they would become lithe, cunning and strong like the leopard, but others refused to eat it from a superstitious fear of spots—like the leopard's—breaking out on their own skins.

The gifts presented by the various chiefs paid the expenses of the festivities, and Satu sat on this skin when he was invested with the high rank of a noble. If the skin had been given to a chief out of the district in which the hunter killed the

animal it would have been resented as an insult, and the towns and villages would have combined to fight the hunter's town or enforced the payment of a heavy fine.

Satu's deceased brother was a very poor trader, and had such frequent losses on his trading journeys that on one occasion he was compelled to "pawn" one of his younger brothers to a neighbouring chief to pay his many debts. He had borrowed fifty pieces of cloth on his brother, and although he frequently afterwards possessed more than that number, and in fact died worth more than three hundred pieces, yet he never troubled to redeem his brother, but left him in servitude. As a "pledge in pawn" the brother received no pay from the one who held him, no matter how hard he laboured.

Satu, on the other hand, was a keen, successful trader, and had accumulated a great amount of native wealth. Consequently, as a rich man and a noble, he was expected by public opinion to redeem his brother out of bondage. One of Satu's first acts after his dignity was conferred on him was to take the fifty pieces of cloth, a calabash of palm-wine and a *white* goat; and, calling Bakula and others to carry the goods and accompany him as witnesses, went to the town where his brother was held in slavery.

On reaching the town he sent for the pawn-broker or holder, who came at once followed by a few friends, who all paid homage to Satu as a great noble. The natives bowed to the King and rendered homage three times at each of the three places as they approached; but to Satu they bowed only once at each place as they drew near.

When all were seated, the calabash of wine was handed round and solemnly drunk by the two principal men and their witnesses. The fifty pieces of cloth were counted out and handed over, and the *white* goat was presented. This *white* gift was called *nkusw' a mpemba*, or a being rubbed white. On receiving this *white* goat the man who held the pawn in pledge arose to his feet and rubbed some chalk with his fingers by the side of the right ear of the pawn. The ceremony is complete, the pawn is redeemed, and the chalk is a sign that he is *clean* from his bondage, and there is nothing more against him. Satu and his brother embraced each other and returned together to their town. The slur of slavery now being wiped out of the family, no one would again taunt them with it.

Satu now turned his attention to help his only niece. It appears that when she was a baby only one or two days old, a man of middle age entered

her mother's house, and dropped a bead into the saucepan that stood by the fire, and from which the hot water was taken to wash the baby. The dropping in of the bead gave the man a claim on the girl to become his wife when old enough. No one else could marry her unless the girl were released by the payment of a heavy sum for breach of custom.

When the child, Sono, reached the age of seven, her deceased uncle had acknowledged the claims of the "bead dropper" to his niece's hand by asking him to pay ten pieces of cloth as marriage money. He could and should have asked more, but he was in difficulty, and glad to accept any sum he could get. As Sono came to realize the small amount that was given for her, she became angry with her uncle and with the man who regarded her as his cheaply bought wife; and this feeling was increased by the girls and boys in her town jeering at her for not being worth more than the price of two pigs.

When she arrived at a marriageable age she refused to marry the old man, and had repeatedly begged her uncle to release her by returning the marriage money and another ten pieces as interest for the use of the money for the past ten years. Her deceased uncle, who was then the head of her family, had refused to part with so much cloth

merely to gratify the whim of a girl, and, besides, he always pleaded poverty.

There seemed no prospect of release for her from a very hateful marriage with an old man who already possessed twelve wives—most of whom had bad, quarrelsome tempers, and would make her life miserable. She had determined to kill herself¹ as her only means of escape; but now that another and richer uncle was head of the family she renewed her appeal with success.

The bridegroom-elect was a crafty old man who thoroughly recognized the advantage of an alliance with so great a family if he could coerce the girl into marrying him, or the possibility of making some money out of the breaking of the covenant should her uncle support her in her continued refusal of him.

He therefore feigned surprise when he was requested to release Sono from her betrothal to him, and asked in anger: "Was he not great enough to become a member of Satu's family! Was he not a great man himself, and owned twelve wives! What objection had lord Satu to him?"

Satu did not attempt to argue these matters with the old man, but went straight to the point by

¹ See note 41, p. 354.

asking how much he wanted before he would release his niece.

"Well," replied the man, "I paid ten pieces of cloth, besides palm-wine, and various odds and ends of trade goods, worth in all fifteen pieces, as marriage money, and your family has had the use of that amount for ten years; so I shall not take less than one hundred pieces of cloth to release her from the betrothal."

"That is a ridiculous price to put on her," retorted Satu angrily. "I will give you twenty-five pieces, one pig, one keg of gunpowder, one calabash of palm-wine, and one soldier's coat."

"But you are now a great chief, and a noble of high rank," contended the old man, "and any one will give sixty pieces of cloth for your niece as marriage money in order to marry into so grand a family. I will not take a fathom less than ninety pieces. Let me tell you a story of a girl who refused her betrothed for frivolous reasons, and was badly treated by her chosen husband." The old man then related this story, called

"Appearances are Sometimes Deceptive."

"Once upon a time a girl was betrothed by her parents to a Mr. Hawk, and for a time she was satisfied with her sweetheart; but by and by she complained that his face was too black. Her

parents tried to teach her that a man was not to be accepted simply because he had a beautiful face, nor rejected for only possessing a very plain, black one; but she would not listen to them.

“One day she put on her ornaments and best cloths, and went to the market, where she met a young man whose name was Oily-face,¹ because it was polished so brightly with palm-oil.

“Mr. Oily-face’s country was a long way off, and when he left home he had a nasty body covered with pimples and scabs, and his eyes bulged out. As he passed through the towns he borrowed a face, some hair, new teeth and a nice skin; consequently when he reached the market he looked a very pleasant young man.

“This Mr. Oily-face saw the girl standing in the market, and said to her: ‘I would like to marry you.’ She looked at him, and seeing he had a beautiful light skin, well-plaited hair, and nice white teeth, she said: ‘All right, come and see my parents.’

“When they reached her town she said to her family: ‘Here is a young man who wants to marry me.’ Oily-face looked so bashful, and showed such respect to the girl’s mother, that they were all pleased with him. Very soon they were

¹ See note 42, p. 354.

married, and shortly after started for Oily-face's country.

"They had not gone very far on the road when some one called out: 'Oily-face, return my hair.' Another shouted: 'Give me back my teeth.' In another town a man requested Oily-face to return the face that he had lent him; and another said: 'Give me back my stomach and take your own; it eats too much.' Thus at last he was reduced to his own nasty body, pimply skin and bulging, ugly eyes.

"After walking many days they reached their town, and the people came round asking Oily-face where he had procured his wife. He told them that she had come from a far country which was ten days' journey away. They welcomed her, but next morning they surrounded the house wishing to eat her.

"She came outside and said: 'Wait, don't eat me yet; but beat your drums and I will dance.'

"So she danced all day to amuse them, and sang a song about a Mr. Hawk being very good, with beautiful, curving feathers; and how sorry she was for not accepting him as her husband. Every morning they wanted to kill and eat her; but she danced and sang to please them.

"One day Mr. Hawk passed that way, and, looking down, saw the woman, heard her song, and

felt full of pity for her. He told her parents of their daughter's danger, and promised to save her. Next day, therefore, he flew off, swooped down, and carried her back to her own family, who were glad to receive her amongst them again. After a time she married Mr. Hawk, and never any more found fault with the colour of his face."

"There," continued the narrator, "your niece will be sorry she did not marry me when she is badly treated by some dandy who has borrowed his beauty from other people. Give me eighty pieces of cloth and I will release her."

To him Satu replied, with a laugh: "I will take care that no such dandy marries my niece and carries her off to a distant country. Besides, my niece is not so foolish as to make friends with any swells (*etoko dia fioti*) on the market." Satu offered twenty-eight pieces and the other articles, and asserted that he would not put another fathom on the price.

They argued about the affair all that afternoon and for the two succeeding days, and at last it was agreed that Satu should pay thirty-five pieces of cloth to the old man, one pig, one keg of gunpowder, one soldier's coat, one gun, and a calabash of palm-wine, and thus the palaver was settled to every one's satisfaction.

A month or two after the release of Sono, a young chief of a neighbouring village arrived, followed by a man carrying a large calabash of palm-wine. Bakula greeted him, and walked with him to Satu's house. There the young man asked for Satu, who, on appearing, received homage from the chief and inquired his business.

"I very much wish to marry your niece, Sono," replied the young man, "and I have brought a calabash of palm-wine to start the negotiations. Will you drink it?"

If Satu had refused to drink the wine the young chief would have taken it away, knowing that there was not the smallest hope of him ever marrying into Satu's family; but Satu did not refuse the wine; he accepted it, and sat down and drank it with the suitor for his niece's hand.

Having drunk the wine, Satu sent for some food, so that the young chief might refresh himself for his return journey; and without giving him a decided answer he told his niece's admirer to come back in four days. So far Satu had not pledged himself, but had simply listened favourably to the suit.

On the appointed day the chief, carrying more palm-wine, returned to Satu, who, having drunk the wine, informed the aspirant to his niece's hand that he was quite willing to regard him as a suit-

able husband for Sono if all other matters could be arranged ; and that the marriage money would be fifty pieces of cloth, two blankets, one pig, fifty brass rods, and five round looking-glasses.

This large sum was asked on the ground that Satu wanted a guarantee that the suitor for his niece was wealthy before he would admit him into so great a family.

The young man was staggered at the price demanded ; and tried to reduce it, without success. He was, however, enamoured of the lady, and at last promised to collect the various goods. But it required repeated trading expeditions about the country and to the coast before the young chief had added sufficient to his savings to pay the marriage money and meet the expenses of the wedding.

A few months passed, and Satu received word that the young chief had gathered the cloth and other articles ; and requesting him to come and inspect them. This Satu did, and being satisfied with the quality of the cloth and the size of the pig, he arranged to return for the goods on a certain day and to bring the girl's father¹ to be introduced to him.

The day arrived, and with it Satu and the girl's father, accompanied by a man carrying their calabashes of palm-wine. The young man called

¹ See note 43, p. 354.

some of his friends to help him drink the wine, and to act as witnesses. The uncle's wine was drunk first, as he is always of more importance in these marriage transactions than the father, mother, or even the girl herself. After the uncle's calabash was finished the father's wine was drunk. The "money" was then counted, and the two blankets and one or two pieces of cloth were given to the father, but the rest was claimed¹ by the uncle.

Up to the present neither the girl nor her mother are supposed to have been consulted; but he would be indeed a foolish swain who went far in the "palaver" without knowing something of the girl's feelings towards him, or sending presents to the girl's mother.

This young man was well acquainted with the girl's favourable regard for him, for had she not received little presents² from him? He knew, too, that his future mother-in-law was on his side, for he had acted generously towards her; hence, when questioned on the matter, she readily agreed³ that the marriage could take place at once.

The young chief had seven wives already, consequently he was well versed in the rites and ceremonies of marriage. At these affairs there is

¹ See note 44, p. 355.   ² See note 45, p. 355.   ³ See note 46, p. 356.

generally a pretence at carrying off the bride; hence on the wedding-day the bridegroom, accompanied by many friends, went to the bride's town, and as they drew near they beat their drums, shouted loudly, fired guns, and made as much noise as possible, as though they were attacking the town. There was a sham struggle, and at last the girl was carried off. This great ado was regarded as an honour to the girl, and a proof of the bridegroom's position.

On returning to his own village the bridegroom told his friends to bring the drums and plenty of palm-wine, and on that and the succeeding three days goats and pigs were killed and eaten, palm-wine was drunk, and guns fired. The bride went without food the day before the wedding, and as a new wife she was not allowed to eat in sight of her husband for three months.

When the crowd had gone the elders met and gave the girl into the hands of the young chief, and they taught them both in the presence of witnesses. To the young woman they said: "You are to respect your husband and his family; and you are to behave yourself properly in your house. You have never had thieving or witchcraft palavers in the past; continue without them, and conduct yourselves properly towards each other."

To the young man they said: "You are to

respect your wife and her family; you must not speak harshly to her, nor treat her as a slave, nor stamp on her things, nor tread her beneath your feet."

Then the young man went to one of the witnesses, and taking him by the wrist, rubbed a bullet on the palm of the witness's hand, and said: "I have heard all the words spoken, and if I destroy the marriage may I die by this bullet."

The young woman then stepped forward and shyly took the same oath. This ceremony completed, the witnesses went into Sono's house and arranged the hearthstones, and instructed the bride in the duties of a wife.

The young chief, in anticipation of his marriage, had built a house for his new wife, because every wife had her own house in which to live and be mistress. The Congo man is too 'cute to put two women in one house; perhaps he has learned by bitter experience the unwisdom of it, and no matter how many wives he may be fortunate enough to marry, he builds a house for each, and one for himself.

Sono, coming as she did from a town which was half a day's journey from her new home, had no farm from which she could draw her supplies of food for herself and husband, in supporting whom she had now to take an eighth share. So a few

days after the marriage she went with the other women, her fellow-wives, and they helped her to clear a patch of ground, hoe it, and plant it with seasonable seeds and roots. In return for their kindness she assisted them in weeding their farms.

It was the custom for the bridegroom to supply his bride with all the necessary food until her farm was matured and yielding; and from that time to give her meat and fish as frequently as possible, while she found her own vegetable food and a share of his. It was also the man's duty to present each of his wives with at least one good cloth every year, and more if he were a wealthy man.

Sono settled down fairly comfortably with her husband and seven fellow-wives. She had her farm to cultivate, a house of her own, an occasional bit of meat or fish sent her from her husband; what more could she want?

One morning our town was aroused by the firing of guns and shouts of *Nkombo ! Nkombo !* (Goat ! Goat !)

Bakula ran out of the house and joined most vigorously in the shouting.

We saw a man covered with perspiration and panting with running. He hurried by to the chief's *lumbu* or enclosure, and fell at the feet of Satu, where he paid most humble homage, covering his face with dirt.

As soon as he gained his breath he said : "I have been badly treated by my master Dimbula, who frequently beat me severely with his whip. See, here are the marks!" and he showed some deep wales across his back, legs and chest. "He not only thrashed me," he continued, "but he robbed me of the small earnings to which by right of custom I am entitled. I have therefore run away from him to you. Will you accept of me?" and he looked beseechingly at Satu, for now his very life depended on the answer. If Satu refused him, and handed him back to Dimbula as a runaway slave, it was most probable that his master, in his rage and shame, would kill him.

Satu considered the matter, and at last, to the relief of the poor wretch, called for a piece of goat's flesh, and giving half to the slave, ate the other half himself.

The crowd that had gathered, directly they saw the piece of goat's meat eaten, shouted : *Nkombo ! Nkombo !* (Goat ! Goat !) and fired off a salvo with their guns.

The slave was practically now a free man. The piece of goat eaten by Satu was a pledge that he would protect the man who had eaten with him from ever falling again into the hands of his old master, even though he had to use the last brass rod, or shed the last drop of blood he possessed, in

so doing. And the slave, by the eating of his piece of goat, was bound, as long as life lasted, to Satu as a *free man*.

On the next market day Satu took the whilom slave and showed him on the market as one who had "eaten his goat," and was now no longer a slave. Dimbula was present, and was chagrined to witness the whole affair; but he was compelled by custom to accept from Satu the merely nominal price of a slave. In selling a slave ordinarily the seller gets as much as he can, and generally makes a good profit on the exchange; but in a transaction of this kind he must take what is offered as the equivalent of a slave, and be satisfied.

Dimbula was a man of ungovernable passions, and it was not the first time that his slaves had escaped from his cruelty by "eating goat" with neighbouring chiefs; while, on the other hand, no slaves had ever run to him for protection or to "eat goat" with him. His fierce, hasty temper was well known and feared.

Slaves free in this way take the name of *Nkombo*, or Goat; and these "goats" are very highly prized by chiefs, as they become very faithful followers of those with whom they have "eaten the goat."

Chapter XVI

Hunting and Bush-burning

Manner of bush-burning—Witch-doctor makes a hunting-charm—Ceremony is carefully performed—Blazing bush and rushing animals—Satu arranges with another chief to burn the bush—Dimbula breaks the law and insults Satu—War is declared—Old Plaited-Beard being unsuccessful accuses Bakula of bewitching him—He tries to restore his luck.

AS the hunting season was drawing near, Satu and his people decided to engage a *ngang'* *a nkongo*, or the "medicine man" of the hunting fetish, to make for them a powerful charm that would endow them with good luck in all kinds of hunting. The time for bush-burning had arrived, when the tall grass in their district would be thoroughly dry by reason of the long drought, and would burn like prepared tinder. It is during the bush fires and the two succeeding months that systematic hunts are organized. It was therefore needful to prepare the charm as quickly as possible.

The first thing that Satu and his people had to do was to burn carefully a belt of grass, a hundred yards wide, right round their town, lest

the great, uncontrollable bush fires should come roaring up before the wind, and reducing their dwellings to ashes, destroy also their treasures and savings at the same time. For the purpose of burning this belt a damp morning, heavy with dew, was chosen; then the men and women went with sticks and knives, and cut or pushed down the grass all round the town—when the stems of grass are damp they are very pliable and are easily pressed down and will remain down as they dry in the morning sun.

The bush grass is anything from six feet to fifteen feet high, with stems as thick as a person's fingers. When they are burning the steam generated in the stems causes them to explode with loud, gun-like reports, and the force of the explosions sends the burning grass hurtling through the air like rockets; hence Satu's people took care to push down the grass so that the stalks pointed away from the houses.

After pressing down the grass round the town the wind was watched, and when it was favourable the broken-down grass was burnt. The men and lads, armed with branches, controlled and directed the flames; Bakula and the other lads just delighted in this bush-burning season, and looked forward to it with eager anticipation of the sport they would enjoy and the game they would secure.

In dreams and talk they killed many an animal long before the first grass was fired.

Satu sent Bakula and two other lads to call the *nganga*, who made the hunting charms. On reaching his town they found him engaged in refreshing and reinvigorating his fetish. He took a large fowl at sunset, and, turning his face towards the setting sun, cut the throat of the fowl and let the running blood fall on the fetish, covering it with the life-blood of the sacrifice. This renewed the strength of the fetish, and, refreshing it, enabled it to impart power to various charms.

He then stood his fetish on the ground and surrounded it with several small heaps of gunpowder—laying a train from one heap to another. When all was ready he exploded the powder, and blew vigorously on his whistle—this aroused the fetish, made it alert and active in performing its work. The *nganga* had the fowl cooked, and ate the whole of it himself, for to sell it or to share it with another would nullify its effect on the fetish as a sacrifice.

Bakula and his companions stood on one side keenly interested in these ceremonies, for was not their future success in hunting dependent in some way on these mysterious rites? Bakula, however, since his close intercourse with the white man, had begun to doubt the pretended powers of these

ngangas, so turning to his fellow-messengers he asked: "How can that wooden image, that has to be refreshed with fowl's blood and aroused with explosions of gunpowder, cause us to shoot straight in our bush lands? And again, how can it make the antelopes and bush pigs come our way, instead of going off in another direction?"

He then told the lads what he had seen in the King's town respecting the *nganga* with his charm of feathers, and the iron prong hidden in them. And he concluded by saying: "I begin to think they trick us, take our money and laugh at us." The lads could not reply to Bakula's reasoning, but they had no doubt that the *nganga* possessed powerful "medicines," and could do anything he liked; and they told Bakula in a friendly way not to let Old Plaited-Beard hear him talk in this manner, or he would quickly accuse him of witchcraft.

Early next morning they returned with the "medicine man" to their town; and immediately on arrival the *nganga* set to work to make the necessary charms. It was a busy time with him, and he would not have come so promptly, but Satu was a great noble and could pay well. The *nganga* procured some red camwood powder, some leaves of the *lupemba-mpemba*-tree, some young spikes of new *nianga* grass, some parrot feathers,

cowry shells, wood ashes, a fore-leg of a bat, some small shot, and some native *peppers*. These he thoroughly cut up and well mixed, and each hunter filled his small horn with the mixture, and sealed the opening with a little rubber. He then received his fee and went.

The hunters being now in possession of their charms, went to visit the grave of a renowned hunter who had died some years previously. It was the custom that when a great hunter was dying he should draw a thread from his *mbadi*¹ cloth, and tie it round the forehead or arms of a young man chosen for the purpose. This person then became the *Kimpovela*, or the one who speaks on behalf of others, *i. e.* an advocate; and this advocate was not allowed to marry more than one wife, and he must never beat her or he would lose his power as an advocate. Only the man thus selected by the dying hunter could perform the ceremonies at this grave. When the great hunter died, his hair was cut off and buried beneath a large stone near his place of burial, that the natives of the district might always know where the grave was situated.

Satu and his party took with them a calabash of palm-wine and, calling the *Kimpovela*, passed on to the grave of the renowned hunter. The

¹ Cloth made from pine-apple or palm fibre.

advocate went first and kneeled with his back to the grave and his face towards the hunters, who approached him slowly, stopping every few steps to clap their hands. When they reached the kneeling man they spread out and sat round the grave, putting the wine and their guns on the ground near by. The *Kimpovela* then turned towards the grave, and shaking his rattle repeatedly, he thus prayed to the deceased hunter: "You are blind, but your ears are not deaf. Oh, ears, hear well! we have come to you, we come kneeling. When you lived in the town you ate and you drank, now we who are left die of hunger; give us male and female animals." When this prayer was finished a man put the calabash of wine on his shoulder, and the *Kimpovela*, making the sign of the cross,¹ took a cup of the wine and poured it as an offering on the grave of the great hunter. The rest of the wine was drunk by the hunters sitting around the grave.

After drinking the wine the *Kimpovela* rubbed a little of the earth wet with the oblatory wine on the forehead, temples, fore-arms, wrists, knees and insteps of each hunter; then he took each gun and drew his fingers up the butt, and reaching the barrel he snapped his fingers and handed the gun to its owner, who on taking it clapped his

¹ See note 47, p. 356.

hands, sprang in the air, and holding the gun in front of him walked backwards a little way, facing the grave, and sat down to wait for the others. When all had finished they fired a salute and sang a song in praise of the great hunter to the rubbing, grating noise of the antelope drum. More palm-wine was drunk, and I am sure that by the time they had exhausted their wine, if they had seen an antelope not one of them was sober enough to have fired straight at it.

After these ceremonies were concluded whenever Satu and his people went hunting they either took their horns of medicine with them, each carrying his own under his belt, or they wetted the rubber stopper and rubbed the butt of their guns with a little of the moisture. This gave them accuracy of aim, or they thought so. By burning the belt of grass round their town they had secured their houses against fire, and by their charms and the visit to the grave of the renowned hunter they had ensured their future success as sportsmen; they were now consequently able to turn their attention to those parts of the bush where animals—antelopes, wild pigs and gazelles—were likely to be found.

A breezy day was chosen, and the hunters, taking their places along the portion of bush to be burned, fired the grass as soon as the night

dews were dried off. Animals browsing were startled by the roar of flames, rushed bewildered before the oncoming fire, and as they ran past were shot at by the waiting hunters. While the fire was burning hawks and fish-eagles circled above the burning bush, not "to drink in the smoke," as the natives say, but in search of any hapless rats and snakes cut off from escape by the raging fire. These birds could be seen swooping down and carrying off to their lairs such reptiles and rats as their keen, hungry eyes detected.

These bush fires have taken place annually for generations, and undoubtedly account for the scarcity of wild game on the Lower Congo, the absence of large reptiles, the shabby appearance of the trees on the open veldt—they scarcely recover from one scorching before the dries are on them and another scorching is due—and the luxuriant grass, for the burnt remains of one crop enrich the soil to bear another as stalwart as the first.

During this season it is very weird to see, night after night, great bush fires blazing in different directions. The sky is aglow with them, and you smell and breathe a smoky atmosphere for days. Bits of charred grass are carried by the winds in all directions, and the country looks dressed in black as though it were mourning with a great

sorrow, and the sun, as though in sympathy with the earth, hides for days behind the clouds of ascended smoke.

During the hunts men are often wounded, and sometimes killed, by being mistaken for animals as they push through the rustling grass. Then follow recriminations, charges of intent to murder, and long law-suits that ruin the unfortunate family of the man who did not stop to look before he fired his gun. Sometimes, when a line of men is crawling through the grass tracking an animal, the trigger of a gun will catch in the stalks, the gun will explode, there will be a scream of a man in the agony of death, and the scared owner of the gun will be charged with murder, for there are no accidents in native law.

The culprit will be fortunate if the deceased is a member of a poor family, or a slave, for then he will get off with a heavy fine; but if the dead man is a person of importance his life will be forfeited, or he will be sold far away into slavery. He will be lucky if he is not shipped to St. Thomé or to Principe to work on the plantations.

During the bush-burning Satu and his men killed only three wild pigs and four gazelles; but they had a very serious quarrel with a neighbouring chief that developed into a war after the hunting season was over.

NATIVE ROPE BRIDGE.

NATIVE BRIDGE.

A part of Satu's land ran by the side of ground belonging to a neighbouring chief named Dimbula; and according to custom Satu sent to Dimbula asking what day would be convenient for burning that part of the bush where their properties joined each other. After much palaver-ing the day was fixed; but when Satu and his hunters reached the spot they found none of Dimbula's people there.

It was against the law of custom for either party to fire the grass before the arrival of the other side; consequently Satu and his men sat waiting all through the long morning, and about noon they decided to return home—vexed with having wasted a whole morning. They had not gone very far when they heard shouts, and looking round saw the bush blazing. On hurrying back to the place they had so recently left, they found Dimbula and his men there.

Satu said: "We arrived here early this morning according to agreement, and we waited until midday, but as you and your people did not come, we did not burn the grass, and were just returning home intending to make a new appointment with you. Why have you broken the custom by firing the grass in our absence?"

"You think that because you are *Ngudi a nkama Katendi* that you can do and say what

you like," replied Dimbula, with ill-suppressed anger and bad logic.

"No," retorted Satu, "that is not so, or I would have lighted the bush early this morning, and not have sat here half the day waiting for you."

"Let me tell you," shouted Dimbula, "that my family had the title when your family was too poor to assume it, and was glad to sell the use of it."

"Yes, that is true," said Satu, "but that is no reason why you should burn the grass by yourself when you know my land runs by the side of yours."

"You think that because you drove a white man out of your town and retained my runaway slave, that you can lord it over us," said Dimbula, who by now was choking with unreasonable rage. In fact, we heard afterwards that Dimbula had planned the whole affair as an insult to Satu, of whom he was jealous, both as a rich man and as a noble of rank; and he also felt hurt because Satu had kept the "goat" that ran to him for protection.

Satu put down his gun, and with calmness and dignity went up to Dimbula and said: "I drove the white man away because I did not know him, and I accepted your slave according to native custom; but they are no excuses for insulting me.

Listen, I swear by my mother,¹ that if you do not apologize and pay homage to me by the end of the hunting season I will fight you"; and turning his back on Dimbula he picked up his gun and walked away.

Just as Satu's party reached the brow of the next hill, Dimbula sprang forward and shouted in contemptuous and boastful derision: "O mighty chief Satu, can I lend you twenty kegs of powder for the coming fight?"

The town was all excitement when they heard of the insults that had been heaped on their chief, and many of the more fiery ones wished to begin the fight at once; but Satu would not give his consent, and told them to wait until the hunting was finished.

A few weeks after the fires were over a fine grass covered the hill-sides and plateaus with such delicious fresh verdure that the antelopes and gazelles were enticed from the forests where they had fled from the devouring flames, to browse on it, and so delighted were they with the new sweet crop that they forgot all dangers, and were easily surrounded by hunters and shot down.

In these hunts native dogs were used, and a "medicine man" was usually called to endow them with good tracking powers. The *nganga*

¹ See note 48, p. 356.

took some chalk, some different leaves and the head of a viper. These he mixed thoroughly together and made into a bundle. He then took a small portion of the bundle and put it in a funnel-twisted leaf, caught a wasp and pressed its juice into the funnel, put in a little palm-wine, and squeezed the juice of this mixture into each dog's nose. They then became good trackers and hunters. The chalk gave them wisdom, the leaves gave good health, the portion of viper imparted stealthiness, and just as a wasp makes straight for its nest, so the dogs would make straight for the game.

Some of Satu's people went one day with their dogs to hunt, and had been gone most of the day when an antelope was seen by Bakula on the side of a distant hill. They instantly spread, worked to leeward and gradually bore down on the unsuspecting creature. The nearest man fired ¹ and the poor animal fell mortally wounded. Directly it fell some grass was cut and spread out, and the antelope was laid on it.

The hunter who killed it put the butt of his gun to his shoulder and the muzzle on the carcass. A cross cut was made on the stomach, and the hunter put his fingers three times to the cut and to his upper lip, then again three times to the cut,

¹ See note 49, p. 357.

and rubbed his fingers each time on his gun. The antelope was then removed, and the hunter put the muzzle of his gun under the grass and turned it over. The animal could not be cut up until this ceremony was performed, or the hunter would have lost his "hunting skill," and, besides, it established beyond a doubt the ownership of the antelope.

The flesh of the animals killed in the hunts is always divided, according to certain well-recognized rules: the kidneys and strips of meat from the back were sent to Satu as chief of the town; one hind-leg was given to the men who were left in the town, and they shared it with their wives; one fore-quarter was given to the hunters, the heart was given to the father of the successful hunter, certain portions were sent to his mother and aunt, and the rest belonged to the man who killed it.

When the antelope was being divided, the bladder was emptied and filled with blood, and in a day or two it was carried to the *Kimpovela*, or advocate, in charge of the renowned hunter's grave. The *Kimpovela* brought from his house a small wooden cross and fixed it in the grave. He then put the successful bullet in the prepared hole in the cross and poured the blood over the cross and the grave as an offering, saying as he

did so: "We thank you for sending us such a fine animal, and hope you will repeat the favour." Only the blood of antelopes is given in this way. Some of the blood was rubbed on their fetish charms, and the end of the antelope's tail was stuck in the wall over the doorway of the successful hunter.

During the hunting season Old Plaited-Beard was unsuccessful in his hunting—not a single animal fell to his gun, although he had several fine opportunities. He was exasperated at his failure, and looked around for the reason why his charms were ineffective. He now recalled to mind what the boys who accompanied Bakula told him on their return about their companion's disparaging remarks concerning the "medicine man," his fetish, and his trickery. He also remembered his admiration for the white man, and the attempts he made to bring about a meeting between them. Putting all these things together, he came to the conclusion that Bakula had bewitched him and his charms, and that consequently he was unable to kill any game.

Old Plaited-Beard sent for Bakula and accused him of destroying the power in his charms; and when the lad strenuously denied the accusation, he told him what he had sneeringly said in the *nganga's* town about "medicine men" and their

tricks; of his companionship with the white man in the King's town; and how he who used to wear so many charms had thrown nearly all of them away. It seemed a very black indictment.

Bakula admitted that he had lost faith in *ngangas*, and told with dramatic force of the *nganga's* exposed trickery in the King's town; he did not deny his liking for the white man, for had he not shown kindness to him in forgiving him and healing his wound? He assented to the charge of throwing his charms away, for he could not see that the messes the witch-doctors put into horns and shells could help them in sickness, hunting, trading, or anything else.

"Besides," he said, "if I had power to affect the charms made by the 'medicine man' for the town, how is it our people have killed pigs, gazelles and an antelope?"

"You let them shoot the animals, and took the spirit from my charms, so that I could not kill any," unreasonably argued the superstitious old man.

"I am sorry no game fell to your gun," soothingly replied the lad, "but it was through no fault of mine."

Old Plaited-Beard looked at the apologetic lad suspiciously, and he thought that his very conciliatory attitude was a sign of his guilt. He

would have understood him better if the spirited boy had burst into loud, angry abuse, recriminations and counter-charges. However, he only said: "Don't do it again. Leave my charms alone and do not laugh at 'medicine men' and their fetishes, for you have put me to the expense of engaging a *nganga* to renew the power in my hunting charm."

Old Plaited-Beard went next day to the *nganga nkongo*, who made three plaits of nine pieces of grass in each plait. He then asked for a piece of the last bird or animal his client had killed. The old man took from his shoulder-bag the tail of a gazelle that he had brought for the purpose and handed it over to the "medicine man."

A hunter always saves a feather or a claw of the last bird he killed, or the tail or hoof of the last animal he shot, and that is why all these odds and ends are stuck in the front walls of the houses. At any time he may repeatedly miss, and may require a piece of the last thing he killed to restore his luck. The *nganga* took the gazelle's tail from Old Plaited-Beard and put it on the ground; he then made three little heaps of loose gunpowder round it, and chalked a cross near the powder, and on the butt of the hunter's gun. The *nganga* exploded the powder; a little gunpowder was then put in the gun, and the hunter, standing a few feet

away, fired at the gazelle's tail, and blew it from the spot on which it was resting, thus proving that his hunting skill had returned to him. If the tail had not been blown out of its position the "medicine man" would have repeated his ceremonies.

After the old man had knocked the tail away, the *nganga* took the gun from him, and put his finger in the dirt where the tail had been, and rubbed a little of the earth three times on the hunter's upper lip; the fourth time he put his fingers on the butt of the gun, and ran them up the barrel and snapped them in the air. He then loosened the plaits, and shook the grass about the gun. Old Plaited-Beard stepped forward, solemnly clapped his hands, took his gun, sprang into the air, and returned home satisfied that in future he would be more successful. He had never been a good shot, and this season he failed utterly, and put all the blame on Bakula, on whom he determined to avenge himself on the first good opportunity.

Chapter XVII

Satu and his People go to War

Satu as the insulted party makes the first move—He sends an embassy to Dimbula—He asks for an apology or offers a bullet—The apology is refused, but the bullet is accepted—The witch-doctor makes a new charm—Mode of fighting—The ridge-pole of chief's house is captured—Dimbula sues for peace with a white goat—Pays homage to Satu—Blood brotherhood is made.

THE hunting season had ended, and Dimbula had neither come to pay homage to Satu, nor sent an apology for the insults he had heaped on him. Dimbula's attitude, his insolence, his breaking the bush-burning custom, and "What would Satu do?" were the general topics of conversation on the markets and around the evening fires. The people belonging to both towns swaggered, boasted of their prowess, and insulted each other whenever they met. There was no hope either of Dimbula humbling himself, or of Satu relinquishing his claims to homage, or at least his rights to courteous treatment.

As Satu was the aggrieved party he was consequently the one to make the first move. Bakula

and another lad were chosen to carry a message and a bullet to Dimbula's town.

It was with much nervous trepidation that they went on their errand. On arriving at the town they found the chief and his head men engaged in a drinking bout. Bakula delivered his message: "Would Dimbula apologize for his insults and pay homage to Satu as a noble of high rank, or would he accept of the bullet Satu had sent him?" Bakula and his comrade then withdrew out of hearing while the men consulted about the answer that should be returned.

When the messengers were recalled, Dimbula said: "We will accept the bullet, as we never intend either to apologize or to pay homage to Satu. Tell him," angrily boasted the excited chief, "that I can let him have fifty kegs of gunpowder if he is short of it," and then followed a string of abusive epithets that I do not care to place on record. The two lads were glad eventually to find themselves outside the town in safety; and, on reaching home, delivered their message faithfully to the waiting people.

Upon the return of the messengers Satu sent to call in all the neighbouring chiefs, except Dimbula, and on their arrival he laid clearly before them the reasons of his quarrel with Dimbula, and his wish to fight him. After full

consideration of the matter the chiefs gave their consent to the fight taking place; and thereupon Satu killed a pig and distributed it among the chiefs. The acceptance of this pig's flesh assured their neutrality, and was a proof of their consent. It was now the business of the chiefs to see that no one went to the assistance of either of the towns at war; and thus Satu had gained an open field, and feared no interference while he was fighting his enemy.

The next thing to be done was to send for the *nganga* who made the war charms. On his arrival Satu and all the men who were to take part in the fighting assembled to greet and fête him, for their success, and perhaps their lives, depended on his good-humour and his care in making their charms. They told the *nganga* that they were willing to pay for the most powerful charms he could make.

The "medicine man" took a frog and killed it, then he procured some twigs from three different trees—the "lembanzau," the "lolo," and the "mfilu"; these four things were carefully burnt together, and the ashes made into a paste by the addition of some water. A little of this paste was put into a large number of snail shells, one of which was given as a charm to each fighting man. Then the men walked round one of the above

trees, and on returning to the town some palm-wine was mixed with the paste remaining in the saucepan, and all drank of it. After each one had drunk a little of this mess, the *nganga* took the saucepan down to the road that led to Dimbula's town, and placed it right in the middle of the path. Each man had then to jump over the pot, and if one had stumbled or touched the pot with his foot while jumping he would not have been allowed to go to the fight. The coming war was a popular one, so every man jumped carefully and lifted his feet well when he came to the saucepan.

The twigs used in making this charm were from "strong medicine trees," and the frog was put in the mixture because they had noticed that the frog's heart pulsates, or, as they say, "lives," for some time after it is taken from the body. This tenacity of life was what the fighters needed.

Early next morning the warriors assembled in front of the chief's home, and he served out the powder to them. Then the *nganga* came with a bowl of palm-wine, and dipping his fingers in the wine touched the lips of the fighters three times with the front and back of his fingers, and told them not to look back, nor enter a house, but go right away to the fight. This he did each morning during the war, for this charm put them under

a spell that removed all possibility of harm or danger. And the warriors being now secured from bullets, knives, etc., went off in high spirits to the fight.

The lads, girls and women who were not permitted to go to the fight brought out their most powerful fetish, and placing it in the middle of a cleared space, danced round it, and as they circled about the ugly image they sang: "You fetish, you must kill any one who is bewitching our fighting men." Hour after hour, through all the long morning and afternoon they assiduously danced and repeated their wearisome and monotonous injunction to their fetish.

Meanwhile, Satu led his men towards his insulter's town; but in a valley that skirted the hill upon which his enemy's town was built he saw Dimbula and his followers drawn up in fighting array. They were arranged in a long line behind trees, stones, ants' nests, hillocks and any other cover they could find. Satu took his men to within sixty yards of the enemy, and then spread them in a long line. Abusive expressions of defiance were hurled at each other, each side ridiculing the bravery of the other, and asking if they had enough powder for the fight.

When they became tired of shouting, they began to fire their guns at one another across the

open bush. One man would load, run out and fire his gun, and return to cover; then another did the same, and sometimes there was simply a flash in the pan and no report at all. Through the whole of the day they fired at one another in this desultory manner, and not a single person on either side was hit. Their guns carried only about thirty yards with any effect, but they generally fired at a distance of about fifty yards. Again, as the butts of their guns were not pressed against their shoulders to steady them while taking aim, but held against the palms of the hands, or against nothing at all, they had free play, and the kick of the guns sent the slugs anywhere but in a straight line. In fact Tumbu, a lad, one day was standing well up the hill some distance above the combatants when a spent slug struck him on the leg, scratching the skin. You see it was not steady, calm aiming that caused a bullet to go straight; but the concoction the "medicine man" put in their charms, and if the bullets went in any direction but the right one it was not their fault, but their charms were not properly compounded, or their enemies had more powerful "medicine."

The fighting had lasted some ten days when it was noticed by Satu's party that their enemy's firing was neither so frequent nor so loud, an

evident proof that Dimbula's boasted supply of gunpowder was running short.

It was now that a slave belonging to one of Satu's head men ran forward in reckless bravado to fire at the enemy, and was himself struck by a bullet in the stomach. A fight with knives and clubbed guns took place over the fallen man.

Dimbula's men wanted to secure the body, and Satu's men resisted the attempt for the following reason: If the corpse fell into the hands of the enemy they would cut off the head, and soak it in water until the skull was freed of all flesh. Then the victor would either put it in a prominent place on a pole as a reproach to the conquered, or he would use it as a drinking-cup. The spirit of a man thus mutilated haunts and kills by witchcraft, not the man who slew him, but the members of his own family. Thus, on the one hand they fight to preserve the body intact so as not to have the vengeance of the spirit falling on them as a family; and on the other hand they fight to mutilate the enemy's body so that his family may be done to death by the angry spirit. Hence the fight now raged over the body of the fallen man.

But Satu's men were too strong, and, at really close quarters, too brave¹ to give way to the

¹ See note 50, p. 357.

insulter of their popular chief, and after a short, sharp scuffle, in which several were wounded on both sides, Dimbula's men took to their heels and bolted towards their town, shouting loudly to the women and children to fly to the forest.

Satu, calling his men about him, gave chase up the hill and into the town, simply to find it deserted. They raided the houses, taking the little treasures that had been overlooked in the hurried flight of their owners, gathered fowls, goats and pigs, and drove them off to their town; but before leaving they pulled out the ridge-pole of Dimbula's house, and carried it away in triumph—for to take the ridge-pole of a chief's house against whom you are fighting is like capturing a royal standard in an English battle.

Satu and his fighters returned with their loot in great jubilation; but on arriving in their town their victorious ardour was somewhat damped by hearing that the slave had died from his wound, and several others had severe cuts and gashes gained in the *mêlée* over the fallen man. The owner of the slave was very much annoyed at the destruction of his property, and said: "How is it my slave was killed and no one else? Surely he was bewitched!" He accused Satu of bewitching him, and the chief would have had to take the ordeal to clear himself of the charge;

but the slain man was a slave, and no free man or chief ever takes the ordeal on account of a slave. Satu, however, soothed the vexed man by promising to make Dimbula pay for the slave, or give another in his place.

Next morning Satu led his men out again; but no sooner had they begun to fire than Dimbula's voice could be heard shouting: "Luve! luve! luve!" or "Peace! peace! peace!"

Instantly upon hearing this cry for peace all fighting, according to custom, must cease; consequently Satu told his men to stop firing. Then a small company of men coming across the valley could be seen, the foremost of whom was Dimbula, and behind him came a neighbouring chief carrying on his shoulders a *white* goat. Dimbula took the *white* goat, and kneeling in front of Satu, said: "I do not want any more fighting, and in token of my submission I offer you this *white* goat."

Satu accepted the goat, and said: "I am glad to receive your *white* goat of submission; but I cannot promise you a lasting peace until you have: First, paid homage to me as a noble of rank; secondly, compensated my head man for a slave killed in the fight; and lastly, paid one hundred kegs of gunpowder and fifty pieces of cloth to compensate us."

Dimbula begged for better terms, and pleaded poverty, stating truly that he had not the powder and cloth. All the swaggering arrogance of the bully had gone out of his tone and demeanour as he cringed on the ground before his conqueror; and as he crouched there he was seen in his true character—a coward.

To him Satu replied: "The homage you can pay now while you are kneeling before me; the slave you can also repay at once to my head man, for I know you have slaves; and for the rest you can hand over one of your brothers and two of your nephews for me to hold in pawn until you have paid the agreed price. This is fair, and I have only one mouth."

Dimbula knew that it would be waste of time to plead further, and in his heart he was surprised that the conditions were so generous; so swallowing his pride he paid homage to his victor as *Ngudi a nkama Katendi*. He then called one of his slaves and offered him to Satu's head man, who, being satisfied with his healthy appearance, accepted him with alacrity. He then called his young brother and two nephews, and, promising to redeem them as soon as possible, put their hands in Satu's, thus completing the conditions of peace.

In the meantime, a *nganga* was called who came

with some stalks, leaves and palm-wine. He pressed the juice out of the stalks into the wine, and well mixing them he dipped the leaves in the liquid, touched the chiefs with the leaves and sprinkled the rest of the mixture indiscriminately over the fighters and people of both sides. Thus peace was established. To ensure this peace for all time, so far as these two men were concerned, the *nganga* let a little blood from them, and gave each to drink the blood taken from the other; then two needles were solemnly buried and the whilom enemies became henceforth staunch friends and blood brothers.

Down somewhere in Dimbula's cruel, bullying, arrogant nature was a soft place for his nephews and brother, for at once he began to trade, nor did he rest until he had gained sufficient to redeem his relatives by taking the hundred kegs of powder, the fifty pieces of cloth, and the necessary three *white* goats to cleanse them from all taint of slavery. Besides, he was eager to reinstate himself with the neighbouring chiefs, among whom he had lost his position as a defeated man too poor to meet the terms of peace. And Satu, as a proof of his increasing friendship for Dimbula, gave him back the ridge-pole that had been torn from his house.

Chapter XVIII

Governing, Marketing, and Trading Customs

The making and enforcing of laws—Fines imposed—Division of fines—Congo week of four days probably named after their markets—Raids and robberies—Preparing a caravan for the road—Rules of the road—Arriving at a trading-station—Mode of trading—Goods given and received.

FROM this time Satu could not engage in trading expeditions, but devoted himself to governing the country by helping to make new laws or administering old ones. As a noble of exalted rank he presided over the chiefs of his district at the big palavers when difficult cases were judged, or called them together to give their sanction to new regulations.

Recently there had been much quarrelling on the markets, resulting in severe wounds and a few deaths. After much thought and many talks with his head men, Satu determined to stop these fatal fights by making a law that in future no guns should be carried on a market-place nor force used during market-time. He therefore sent for all the chiefs of the district, and on their arrival

laid clearly and forcibly before them the new law and the reasons for it. He also suggested that for every breach of the law a fine of three pieces of good cloth should be inflicted.

This was discussed, and it was finally settled that for taking a gun on the market the fine should be two pieces of cloth, and for originating a quarrel the fine should be five pieces, and the defaulter to pay all the damages of the disturbance.

As soon as this was settled Old Plaited-Beard was nominated as the *Nenkondo*, or enforcer of the new law; and Satu divided the flesh of three pigs among the assembled chiefs; and they accepted it as a proof of their assent to the new law, and their promised aid in enforcing it. After this the witnessing chiefs went to a cross-road and one of their number proclaimed the new law. Lying on the ground he rubbed his mouth in the dirt, and then striking his knees with his hands he called down a bitter curse on any one who dared to break this edict.

This ceremony has often a very terrifying effect on the people, and he will be a bold fellow who risks the curse.

Each chief returned to his village or town, and told all his people of the new law and its penalties; thus, a day or two after the new rule was

made and promulgated at the cross-roads, every one affected by it had heard of it.

It was now the duty of Old Plaited-Beard to follow up quickly any infringement of the new command, no matter who the culprit might be; and it was not long before a slave of a neighbouring chief carried a gun on to a market and in a drunken quarrel severely wounded a man. Old Plaited-Beard, the *Nenkondo*, had to bestir himself at once to follow up the man who had broken the law.

This activity was necessitated by a curious view taken by the natives of laws in general. From the time a law was broken until the breaker of it was punished, that particular law did not exist, it was broken, dead; hence, for instance, any man could take a gun on a market and shoot another person and go unpunished, because the law against that crime was dead and could not be mended or brought again to life until the first breaker of it was punished by paying the penalty. This ensured quick dealing with culprits, and impartial administration of the law, for if a chief broke the law he was judged immediately like an ordinary man and paid the penalty, otherwise anarchy reigned until the law was vindicated by the infliction of the fine on the law-breaker. To neglect to punish the chief would mean that any

one could repeat the crime with impunity, for the law was dead.

The slave was quickly caught and brought before the chiefs; but as a master is responsible for the actions of his slave, it was really the owner who was on his trial and had to pay the fine of five pieces of cloth and compensate the wounded man. On meeting all the demands the master received his slave again, and did with him as he liked. The slave was his property in the same sense as his goats, fowls or pigs, and after cruelly punishing the man he sold him away from his wife and children to a distant tribe of people, and we never saw nor heard of him again.

The fines imposed on law-breakers are periodically divided among the chiefs of the district. They are one source of their income, and repay them for the trouble of administering the laws and governing the people. Satu, of course, took a larger share of the fines than the other chiefs. He not only presided over the palavers, but he also acted as treasurer and stored the fines until the time of division, and if he had failed to give the other chiefs their proper share at stated intervals, they would have refused to judge cases with him, and the country would have quickly become unmanageable and disorderly.

A share of the fines, however, would not

support Satu as a chief and noble; consequently he had to turn his attention to trading on the markets and with the white men down at the coast. Bakula on account of his smartness was often employed by his chief to sell pigs, cloth, goats, gunpowder and other goods on the markets.

There are four days in a Congo week—*Konzo*, *Nkenge*, *Nsona* and *Nkandu*, and these are also the names of the markets held on those days. All the markets on a certain day all over our part of the Congo are called *Konzo*, and all the markets next day are called *Nkenge*, and so on. These markets are all held in different places, *e.g.* all the *Konzo* markets are held in different places from all the rest of the markets on the other three successive days; and these markets are so arranged that one in four comes within two to five miles of every town or village on the Lower Congo.

Thus one of the *Konzo* markets was only four miles from our town; the nearest *Nkenge* one was nine miles away from us, but near some other towns, the nearest *Nsona* market was sixteen miles away, and the *Nkandu* market was nearly twenty miles distant from us, but not far from some other villages. Again, some of these markets were famous for certain articles that were always to be found on sale at them. For instance,

at one *Nkenge* a person could always find pigs, and buyers and sellers of pigs consequently travelled to that particular *Nkenge*; another *Nkenge* was noted for pots, calabashes and sauce-pans. One *Nsona* would be noted for cloth and another for palm-wine. At all the markets cassava roots, *kwanga*, or native bread, peanuts, beans and various other food-stuffs were on sale, besides the speciality of the market.

There are also five important markets that are held every eight days, not on the same but on the successive eighth days. These are called *Nkenge Elembelo*, held not far from the King's town; *Konzo Kinsuka*, about two days north of the previous one; two days farther north is *Konzo Kikandikila*; three days north of that is *Konzo Makwekwe*, and about another two days north, but on the other side of the great river, is the *Nkenge Nkila*. Perhaps these great markets are to be found well established much farther north and south of the points I have named, and are only limited by the boundaries of the old kingdom of Congo, which formerly included Landana on the north and Bihe on the south.

While there were stringent laws against fighting, raiding, quarrelling and capturing people on the markets, no law could be enforced to guard small, unprotected parties on the way to or from

the markets. Rowdy rascals would lie in wait and pounce on any defenceless child or adult, and, hurrying them away to some distant place, sell them into slavery, to the intense grief of their relatives.

I heard Bakula once tell how his young sister was sent by her mother to buy a saucepan at a market only four miles from home. She had bought the vessel and was returning to her town in the company of some neighbours, when, in a forest, she strayed from the path and was never heard of again, although the whole town turned out to search the forest.

Now and again some of these daring, reckless scamps were caught, and the whole countryside would wreak its vengeance on them, for there was scarcely a family but had lost one or more of its members or some of its goods by these kidnappings and robberies.

Bakula and some of the men were sent to the various markets far and near to buy up rubber and tusks of ivory. Sometimes they would take pigs and goats to sell, and having sold them would then buy what rubber and ivory there were for sale on the market. At other times they would take cloth and gunpowder to give in exchange for those products that white men bought at the coast—rubber and ivory. Occasionally they had to go

to distant markets to buy pigs for cloth, and then travel to another market to exchange the pigs for rubber, peanuts and tusks.

Thus the rubber and ivory were gradually accumulated by the richer natives, and when enough were gathered a large caravan of men, from eighty to a hundred and twenty in number, was dispatched to the trading houses at the coast. As the natives could neither read nor write, it needed a clear head and a complicated system of knots and notches to keep a record of what was spent in pigs, goats, cloth and gunpowder in buying up the little stores of rubber and ivory on the markets. A man would tie a knot in a string for every pig sold, another string was used for every goat, another for every keg of gunpowder, and a notch was cut in a stick for every piece of cloth. By counting the knots and notches he knew just how much the ivory, rubber and peanuts had cost him; he also knew how much each man would "eat" on the road, and therefore he was quite able to ask of, and only accept from, the white traders a price that would pay for his stuff, meet the expenses of his carriers, and leave him a fair margin of profit for his risk of capital and trouble.

After months of petty trading on the markets, sufficient rubber, peanuts and ivory were collected

to warrant a journey to the coast. Satu himself could not go, so he sent one of his head men, and told him how much he wanted for the produce he was sending, which would require forty men to carry it. Satu's agent had ten loads, and neighbouring chiefs and head men joined the caravan with their porters, so that when all were ready to start there were nearly one hundred and forty men and lads in the party, and as most had knives, guns or spears they were well able to protect themselves on the long, wearisome road.

When all was arranged for the journey a "medicine man," named *Ngang' a mpungu*, or the Luck-giver, was called. He came with his bag, containing pieces of leopard's skin, hyæna's skin, lion's skin, and, in fact, a piece of the skin of every strong animal he could procure, and also some albino's hair; and he carried with him his wooden fetish image with grass tied round its neck, knotted back and front.

The "medicine man" sat in the middle of the caravan, which stood round him with their bundles tied ready for the journey, and put the fetish image in front of him. The *nganga* spoke to the image, telling it to give the traders good luck on the road and at the trading-station. A man then held a fowl by the head and the "medicine man" took it by the body and cut its head off and let

the blood drop on the image. After this the fowl was cooked and eaten outside the houses; and during and after this ceremony no one could enter a house or turn back from the road.

The fowl having been eaten, a shell was brought containing very small pieces of everything that was in the fetish bag of charms, and this shell was placed on the road by which the men had to travel to the coast. Every one in the caravan had then to step carefully over the shell, for if any one had touched it he would not have been allowed to proceed or he would die on the journey. Having passed safely over the shell of charms, we were not to look back or our luck would have been destroyed. Bakula performed these various rites in a very half-hearted manner, for he was losing faith in them.

As we were starting the members of our party shouted to the people left in the town: "Good health to you, and let no one follow us to give us bad luck in trading"; and those left behind said: "Good journey to you, and do not any of you return to bewitch us, or carry us to sell to the white traders." The idea behind these requests was that any living person who is a *ndoki*, or witch, can visit a place by his *nkwiya*, or evil spirit, and take a person away, or work them great harm by his witchcraft. Hence they live in

constant fear of each other, and all their charms, fetishes, and witch-doctors are employed in protecting them from one another. Before Bakula reached the shell his mother came hurrying towards him, and, pretending to spit on his face, said: "May you have all that you desire, may you have happiness and good luck, and may your words find favour with the people." It was her mode of saying farewell to her son.

We were now fairly started on the road, and as all the omens were in our favour and the *nganga* had performed his ceremonies without the slightest hitch, everybody was in good spirits, and more ready to laugh and sing than grumble at the weight of the loads. Many points of etiquette had to be remembered as we passed through the numerous towns and villages on our road to the coast.

On passing through a village we were not allowed to let our sticks touch the ground or we should destroy the luck of that place and that would mean a heavy fine. While in the open country or bush many of the men hitched up their cloths (exposing their thighs) to give greater freedom to their legs; but on passing through a town they dropped their cloths out of respect to the town, or otherwise they would have been taken to the chief's house and well beaten.

In passing through any town every carrier was careful not to put his load on his head, as that was regarded as an exhibition of insolent pride, and would have aroused the anger of the townspeople, and a fight, with heavy fines, would have resulted. If we sat resting on the ground in any town we had to be careful not to shake off the dust from our cloths until we got outside the town, as such an action was regarded as putting a curse on the place.

Tolls had to be paid for using all bridges and canoes in crossing the larger rivers in our path; and a tax, according to the number of carriers and the value of their loads, was demanded by the overlords of the districts through which we passed. The non-observance of these customs and points of etiquette led sometimes to quarrels and fights between insolent travellers and insulted townsfolk.

On our arrival at the coast we were met by a native interpreter, who had visited our town and given Satu twenty pieces of cloth on the understanding that he was to have the privilege of selling our chief's "trade produce" to one of the white traders. This interpreter showed us much hospitality, hoping thereby to be seller for the whole caravan.

The morning after our arrival we sorted Satu's

stuff into three lots—ten loads of ivory, eight loads of peanuts, and twenty-two loads of rubber. It was decided to sell the rubber first, so the men carried their loads to the trader's store accompanied by the interpreter. The following conversation then took place, the white man and the interpreter talking Portuguese, and the native trader and the interpreter talking the vernacular—

Interpreter to white man : "How much for this rubber?"

The rubber was carefully examined and weighed.

White man : "I will give 200 pieces of cloth."

Interpreter to native trader : "He will give you 80 pieces of cloth."

Native trader : "That is not enough, I want 170 pieces."

Interpreter to white man : "They want 250 pieces of cloth."

White man : "That is too much; I will give 210 pieces."

Interpreter to native trader : "He will give you 90 pieces."

After much haggling the white man reached his limit of 220 pieces; and after much talking, lasting nearly the whole day, the native trader brought his price down to 150 pieces, and the interpreter worked his up gradually to that

amount. Being now agreed, the interpreter told the white man to take the rubber, and pay 150 pieces to Satu's agent. Satu had instructed his agent not to take less than 135 pieces of cloth, and had also informed him what goods he was to select from the store. Having received fifteen pieces more than they anticipated, they reckoned that they had sold to great advantage.

Having settled the price, we went over to the store to draw the goods. Arranged round the store were the trade goods: cloths of various colours, lengths and qualities; plates, dishes, basins, ewers, mugs, cups, glasses, looking-glasses of different sizes, bright beads of gorgeous colours, machets, knives and guns. In another store was a huge pile of bags of salt, and isolated from the other houses was a store full of gunpowder.

Satu's agent, according to his instructions, picked out fifty pieces of cloth; gunpowder to the value of fifty pieces, and fifty pieces worth of beads, mugs, trinkets, rum and gin.

All these articles were carried over to the shed in which we were living while transacting our business with the trader. Then the ivory was sold in the same manner, and, the price having been settled, guns, powder, liquor, blankets, cloth, etc., were selected up to the agreed amount.

WHITE TRADER AND NATIVE TRADERS AND THEIR PRODUCE.

The sale of the peanuts was a very simple matter. We put the nuts on the scale, and salt was weighed against them, and when they balanced a gaudy coloured plate was put on top and the sale was completed, *i. e.* we received weight for weight in salt for our peanuts and a make-weight of a plate on top of each load.

Every article in the white man's store had a price on it. It was either equivalent to one piece of cloth, or to two or more pieces, or so many of it equalled the value of one piece. The first kind of cloth taken to Congo was probably of a common quality worth about 2s. for a piece of twelve yards. By and by other qualities were taken, and they were reckoned as equal to one and a half, two, or three pieces of the original quality. Then the natives wanted other things besides cloth, and as they were introduced the traders put a cloth value on them, *e. g.* six knives were equal to one piece of cloth, eight looking-glasses ditto, four strings of one kind of beads, or twenty strings of another sort, were priced at one piece; and thus through the whole list of goods stocked by the traders.

If a trader priced his goods high it was quickly known, and his store was avoided by the natives. They always went to that store where they received the best prices for their produce, where

the articles in the store were cheapest, and where they were treated properly.

We remained ten days at the coast, selling the rubber, peanuts and ivory our caravan had brought from the interior. Some of the native traders were dissatisfied with the prices offered by the white trader, or were suspicious that the interpreter was retaining too much for himself, and for these reasons went to other white men and employed other interpreters; others of our party thought the prices of the store goods were too high, and went to those traders whom they thought sold their barter goods at reasonable rates.

It took us, as I have already stated, ten long, wearisome days of haggling, bargaining and chaffering to dispose of our produce to the best advantage. During this time our food supply was running low, and we often had not half enough to eat. Food at the coast was very dear, and we were all glad when our business was concluded and we could turn our faces homeward.

The return journey was accomplished without any incident more serious than the breaking of a few china ornaments belonging to Old Plaited-Beard, who had seen such things in the King's house and had instructed his men to buy him similar ones with some of the produce he had

sent for sale. The man, however, who carried them slipped on some huge boulders while crossing a river, and down he fell, cutting his own knees and smashing the fragile contents of his load. The old man, when he saw the results of the accident, did not blame his carrier of carelessness, but rather accused some one of bewitching him and thus causing the destruction of the goods. And with a look of hate in his eyes and a curse on his lips he threatened to punish the witch.

All the men and lads of our party were glad to be again among their own families. During the whole journey to and from the coast, and while at the trading centre, they had eaten very sparingly, as food was heavy to carry and very dear on the road; but now that they had returned they made amends for lost time and hungry days. Huge dishes of food quickly disappeared, and those who had become thin during the twenty-five days of short rations began to fill out again, and those who were feeling exhausted by the heavy loads they carried up and down hill and along rugged, narrow tracks began, after some refreshing, restful sleeps, to feel strong and active again and ready for the next trading expedition.

Chapter XIX

An Accusation and the Ordeal

Old Plaited-Beard charges Bakula with stealing—The accusation is denied—Bakula declares his disbelief in charms and witch-doctors—Satu saves him from immediate death—The missing cloth is found in Bakula's house—Tumbu exposes the accuser's trickery—He is ridiculed—Bakula submits to the ordeal of the boiling oil—His arm is badly scalded—During the night Bakula escapes to the mission station.

A FEW days after the return of the trading caravan, the whole town was startled to hear that some one had stolen two pieces of cloth from Old Plaited-Beard's house. He was most emphatic and circumstantial as to when and where he had left the cloth, and the disappearance of the pieces. He borrowed a strong fetish from a friend, beat it soundly to arouse it to action, held it three times above his head that its spirit might rush through the air in pursuit of the thief, held it also three times head downwards near the ground to enable the fetish spirit to run along the earth after the robber, and then hung it by the neck to the roof of his house. Then the old man waited a day or two, but the cloth was not returned.

Old Plaited-Beard fumed in pretended rage about the loss of his cloth, and at last accused Bakula of stealing it. The lad indignantly denied the charge.

The old man said: "Ever since you met that white man in Tonzeka's town you have been a different lad. You do not enter into our fetish palavers, you laugh at the witch-doctors, you destroyed the power of my charms so that I did not kill a single animal through the whole of the hunting season, you bewitched my carrier, thus causing the breaking of all my crockery ornaments, and now you have stolen my cloth."

"I am not guilty of any of these charges," stoutly maintained the lad. "I have not stolen your cloth! Search my house if you like, for since our return from the trading journey to the coast I have not been to a market, nor have I been out of the town except to bathe in the river, so I have had no opportunity of disposing of the cloth. It is true that since the white man put medicine on my wound, and talked to me about God's palaver I have lost my faith in charms and 'medicine men.'"

A great crowd by now was surging round the two principal persons in this strange scene, and a howl of derision went up from scores of throats

when the brave lad daringly avowed his disbelief in charms and witch-doctors.

"He is a witch! Give him the ordeal!" shouted some. "Kill him!" screamed others, "or he will bewitch all of us."

And women held their children tightly to their bosoms, and begged them not to follow the example of "that wicked boy."

Satu came hurrying up to learn the cause of all the excitement, and when the whole case was laid before him he felt a great pity for the lad, and determined that he should have fair play; for he liked him, and had admired his smartness in trade, and alertness in games, dancing and hunting. Besides, he knew that his accuser, Old Plaited-Beard, hated the boy for some unknown reason.

When, therefore, the mob again demanded either the ordeal or death for the undaunted boy, the chief at once said: "No, let us search his house as he desires, and if we find the cloth in it, then we will have a palaver and punish him according to our laws."

A rush was instantly made for Bakula's house, where he lived with his mother; but no one entered until the chief actors arrived, and then Satu, Old Plaited-Beard, Bakula, and one or two others entered the house; and after searching

about the hut for a very short time Old Plaited-Beard pulled the two pieces of cloth from a corner of the roof, in the dark inner room, where they were concealed by some grass.

The discovery of the cloth was hailed with screams of laughter, shouts of derision, and whistles of contempt. And if Satu had not been there, my poor owner, Bakula, would have been torn to pieces by the infuriated crowd, not because stealing was such a heinous crime in their eyes—there was not an honest man, woman or youth among the whole mob of screamers and shouters; but the discovery of the cloth in the house was taken as a proof of his witchcraft and utter stupidity.

In a very short time Satu was seated with his head men ready to judge the case. Old Plaited-Beard sat there with a snigger of triumph on his evil face, and Bakula, crestfallen, confused, but undaunted, stood, the centre of all eyes, the object of ridicule and contempt.

“Why did he not hide the cloth in the bush? Why was he such a fool as to leave the cloth in his own house?” were questions everybody was asking. The crowd derided Bakula for being a fool, rather than blamed him as a thief.

The court was held on an open space in the centre of the town, beneath the wide-spreading

branches of a wild fig-tree. In a simple case like this there were no advocates, and no sides taken as in a big law-suit. Old Plaited-Beard told of the loss of the cloth, of his charging Bakula with the theft, and the discovery of the cloth by himself in the accused person's house.

Bakula strenuously denied the theft, and gave a very clear account of all that he had done and the people with whom he had been since his return a few days ago. He appealed to Satu to state how he had accounted for every yard of cloth he had used when trading on the markets for him, and finished by saying that for some reason the *Nenkondo* (the new title of Old Plaited-Beard) hated him, and had more than once threatened to do him some harm.

Old Plaited-Beard scornfully asked: "Do you think I should steal my own cloth and put it in your house?"

Just then a lad, by name Tumbu, asked Satu for permission to speak, and, trembling with excitement, said: "The other day, when the town was nearly empty of people, I was lying down in my house, being too ill to go with Bakula and the other lads to bathe in the river; and while I was lying there I saw *Nenkondo* come along, and, after looking around on every side, enter Bakula's house, which is right opposite mine. I watched

him, and saw that he had something under his cloth; but when he came out the something was gone, for his cloth was flat on his thighs. Why did he go into Bakula's house? and what did he leave there?"

Old Plaited-Beard was furious, and, choking with rage, he snapped out the question: "Is Bakula a friend of yours?"

"Yes," bravely answered the lad. "I am, as you know, a slave, and Bakula has always been kind to me. He has given me food when I have been hungry, and defended me from the taunts of the other boys and girls of the town."

Bakula, as soon as his friend had finished speaking, instantly sprang forward, and said: "I accuse Nenkondo of stealing his own cloth and putting it in my house. Tumbu is my witness to that; but there is no witness to show that I have been in his house. He is the thief, not I!"

Satu consulted his head men for a considerable time; but at last said: "There are two persons before us who accuse each other of thieving, and it is difficult for us to decide. We will therefore call the *nganga*, and will try the case to-morrow by the ordeal of the boiling oil; and whichever one is proved guilty must pay a fine of five pieces of cloth."

After this decision the crowd at once broke up, and that night around the fires there was much speculation as to which of the two would prove the guilty one.

Early the next afternoon a *nganga* arrived with a deep vessel filled with palm-oil. This was placed on a fire and attended to, while the *ngangā's* assistants walked about the town. One of these assistants called to Bakula and asked him to show the way to the stream. When they were a little out of the town the assistant turned, and said to Bakula: "If you will give me fifty brass rods my master will put something on your hand and arm so that the boiling oil will not burn you, and you will be proved innocent. Will you pay me the money?"

"No; I am perfectly innocent of the charge," replied Bakula, "and if there is any truth in the ordeal, it will show all the people that I am guiltless. For many moons now I have doubted witch-doctors, and believed that they tricked us, laughed at us and robbed us."

"You had better pay the money," sneeringly retorted the *nganga's* assistant, "otherwise you will have to pay the five pieces of cloth."

"Yes, I know your way," replied the lad. "It is like this: I promise you fifty rods, then you go to the other and he promises you sixty, and after

that you come to me and I promise seventy rods, and he offers eighty, and it is the one who eventually gives you the largest amount that wins the case by ordeal. No, I will not promise a single brass rod, for I know I am innocent, and if the ordeal does not prove it I shall know for a certainty that your *ngangas* are liars and cheats, and your ordeals trickeries and swindles."

The assistant, heaping on him much abuse, and throwing at him many epithets of reproach, called him an utter fool, and returned to the town.

Later in the afternoon the drum sounded, and the people hurried to the judging-place. Women had not been to the farms that day or had returned very early; the men had not been to either market, forest or bush; and people had come in from the surrounding villages, for everybody who could be there was present, because no one wanted to miss so sensational a sight as the ordeal by boiling oil.

Satu and his head men sat by themselves a few yards from the saucepan of oil. Bakula and Old Plaited-Beard were at opposite sides of the circle of people that watched the proceedings intently. Old Plaited-Beard was called first, and approached the saucepan with a jaunty air, smirking face, and anticipated triumph in every movement. He submitted his right hand and arm to

be rubbed with some decoction ¹ by the *nganga*; a piece of *kwanga*, or native bread, was dropped in the oil, and then, with an insolent flourish, Old Plaited-Beard dipped in his hand and arm and brought out the piece of *kwanga*. His skin was not scalded, he had passed the ordeal successfully, and was thus proved innocent of the charge.

On the plea that the first ceremonial use of the oil had cooled it too much to be a proper test, the *nganga* and his assistants heaped fire about the pot, and it was not until the oil began to bubble that the "medicine man" pronounced it ready for the other accused person.

My owner, Bakula, now went forward with set face and steady step to where the saucepan of oil was sending up jets of steam. I could feel his chest heaving, his breath coming and going in quick, short gasps, his body trembling with the excitement of the hour, and his heart pulsating turbulently.

The tension was great, the sea of faces seemed to crowd about and press in upon him; and as he drew near the saucepan he could see the glint of hatred and triumph in the *nganga's* eyes, but he answered them with a look of defiance.

The *nganga* rubbed something on the lad's

¹ See note 51, p. 357.

arm and hand, and dropped the piece of *kwanga* in the bubbling oil.

Every head in that great crowd was bent forward, and, as a hush fell on the assembly, every eye was fixed on the lonely, slim, young figure standing before that saucepan of fiery oil.

Without hesitation, for he was absolutely sure of his guiltlessness, Bakula boldly dipped his hand in the boiling liquid, but before he could reach the *kwanga* at the bottom of the saucepan, a paroxysm of pain seized him and, with a scream of agony, he fell fainting to the ground.

His friend Tumbu and the chief hurried to him and warded off, by their bodies, any intended blows upon the prostrate, unconscious lad; and between them they carried him to his hut.

When Bakula returned to consciousness he was lying on his rough bamboo bed, and his mother, with unskilled kindness, was trying to bind up that burning arm in poultices of leaves, and Tumbu was weeping by his side.

Tumbu told his suffering friend that Satu had paid the five pieces of cloth and the *nganga's* fee, and the matter was therefore settled.

"And," continued he, "although everybody in the town thinks you stole the cloth, I know you did not."

Bakula then told his faithful companion how

the *nganga's* assistant had come to him before the ordeal, and had asked for money; that there was no doubt the Nenkondo had given a bribe, and so had passed the ordeal without a burn; and, emphatically asserted the lad, "After this I will never again believe in *ngangas*, nor in charms, nor in ordeals. I am innocent, but look at my arm."

The two friends sat talking all the evening, and at last Bakula said: "To-night I am going to escape to the white man's station. He will heal my scalded arm, and teach me God's palaver."

"Wait until the morning," pleaded Tumbu. "Don't travel in the dark, or the evil spirits will throttle and squeeze the life out of you."

"Who talks about evil spirits?" asked Bakula. "Only the 'medicine men,' and perhaps what they tell us about them is as great a lie as their charms, fetishes and ordeals. I will test that to-night as I have tested their other teaching to-day." And a look of undaunted determination came into the brave fellow's face, which, being seen by Tumbu in the flickering firelight, stopped his further arguments.

It was towards midnight that Bakula took farewell of his mother, and creeping from his house with stealthy steps, passed through the sleeping

town and into the darkness of the silent, tangled, spirit-haunted bush. What lay before him? Would it always be the darkness, the tangled paths environed with fearful spirits? Or would he come into the light, that would show him the straight, clear road, and, chasing away the evil spirits of darkness, reveal the ministering angels of the white man's God?

Chapter XX

Bakula at School

After much nursing Bakula recovers—He becomes a school-boy—He struggles with the alphabet—He learns to understand pictures—Routine life—Bakula itinerates with his white man—He does not relish sleeping in the wet bush—He is convicted of sin—He inquires the way of salvation—The lads play a trick on a witch-doctor—Bakula is received into the Church—He returns to his town.

AFTER a long, weary walk Bakula reached his uncle's town, and, staying only to tell him the news, and show him his scalded arm, continued his journey to the mission station. By the time he arrived he was feverish and his arm very painful. The missionary in charge of the medical work at once dressed the inflamed arm and put the exhausted lad to bed.

For many days Bakula was delirious, repeating with monotonous reiteration his innocence and the dipping of his arm in the boiling oil. At times the missionaries feared he would die; that the strain, the scalding, and the fatiguing walk would prove too much for him; but at last he began to recover—skilled treatment, regular food, and

Photo]

THE REV. JOHN H. WEEKS AND HIS BOYS.

[Rev. J. H. Weeks.

careful attention triumphed; and the lad was in due time walking about, little the worse, except for the scars on his arm, for the ordeal through which he had passed.

Bakula, on his recovery, found himself in a new world. When asked if he would like to stay on the station and be taught, he, immediately and gladly, accepted the invitation, and was handed over to the white man in whose district¹ his town happened to be.

Bakula had always thought that "books talked" to the white men. In common with other natives he had said, when he saw a white man looking at a book and laughing: "The book is saying something funny to him." He was therefore disappointed to find that the white teacher gave him no "medicine" to cause him to understand "book language," and performed no magic over him to open his ears to the "whispers of book talk"; but that it was a matter of learning properly those curiously twisted and contorted marks called a, b, d, e; and he also found that so many of them changed their appearance when *written*, and again altered "their legs and arms" when they grew into *big* letters that he was puzzled, and sometimes feared that he would never know them.

How elusive those letters were! Just as he

¹ See note 52, p. 357.

had mastered them on the printed sheet they changed themselves on the blackboard; and when he wanted to write the "full-grown ones," and drew them as he remembered them on the sheet, he was told they were wrong, and had to train his hand to all kinds of curves and scrolls. It was like learning four alphabets; but by perseverance and attention he conquered them, so that, no matter what their disguises might be, he recognized them, and would say: "Oh yes, Mr. S; you can curve your back like this, S, or lean half yourself on a stick thus, *S*, but I know you."

Meanwhile he had learned to put two letters together and make syllables, and from that accomplishment he was led on to connect the syllables and form words; and from that point the school work became more interesting. Now that the building was showing above the ground he could see the reason for all the foundation work. By the time he had been in the school about two years he was nearing the top classes, and, laughing at the mistakes of newer boys, encouraged them, by his own example, to conquer their difficulties.

Bakula also found there was another language to learn—that of pictures. He had seen pictures at a distance in the houses of the traders, and they had simply been a blurred whole, like the pages of a book written in unknown characters.

In the house of the white man, where he spent many a pleasant evening, he saw some copies of the *Graphic*.

At first he was unable to take in a picture as a whole. He held the illustrations upside down, or sideways, and more often the wrong way than the right one. In time, order seemed to emerge out of the chaos of marks and lines, then he would pick out a feature and say: "That is a nose, or a mouth, or an eye," as the case might be, and thus he traced out a man or a woman and said: "Why, it is a person!" He did the same with a house, picking out the details, as a door or window, etc., and the same with scenery.

Later he could take in all the details at once. He had to learn to understand pictures by the same method that he learned to read—first the a, b, d, then the t a t a=tata (or father), and lastly the whole word or sentence at a glance. Sometimes he had to appeal to the white man to explain a difficult detail, as a railway, a ship, or a horse; but gradually the pictures opened up a mine of information, and introduced him to new worlds of wonder.

A white man laughingly joked him one day about the pain and inconvenience Congo women suffered in wearing heavy brass collars round their necks, and on their legs anklets of great weight in

order to be in the fashion; but Bakula quickly turned over the pictures, and finding a fashion plate that depicted a woman with a very tiny waist, he seriously asked: "Which is the more ridiculous—to wear a brass collar round the neck, or to have a waist like a wasp's?"

During all these months Bakula had worked each day for four hours either on the farm or in the brick-field—puddling clay, fetching water, carrying the clay, or, as he became more expert, making bricks.

The life on the station was very regular. At 6 a.m. the boys rose to the clanging of a bell, and went to work either on the farm, the brick-field, or in the houses of the missionaries; from 8 to 9.30 was taken for breakfast and a short service, and then each gang of boys arranged themselves outside the house of the white man who was working the district from which they came. They stood in lines according to ages. At these parades the white man listened to all complaints, settled all palavers, instructed his group of boys in station matters, taught them, when necessary, on points of behaviour, and gave them the tickets for the day's rations. The hours from 10 to 12 were spent in school, and from then until 2 p.m. at dinner and play.

Then came two more hours of schooling, and

from four o'clock until sunset at six¹ the boys engaged in farming, brick-making, or working in their masters' houses. Thus each day there were four hours for work, four hours for school, three hours for eating and playing, and one hour for religious instruction.

On Saturdays there was no school, but the boys worked at their various employments or tidied up the station, except from 8 to 10 a.m., when the lads had their breakfasts, religious service, and the usual daily parade outside the houses of their respective white men. At one o'clock the stop bell rang, and every boy received a piece of soap and went off after dinner to do his washing and have a swim in a neighbouring river.

Besides the employments already mentioned there were others, as printing, bookbinding, composing, carpentry, bricklaying, washing and ironing, cutting out and sewing jackets for the boys on the station, cooking, and house-cleaning. For these occupations special lads who showed aptitude were selected and taught, and they received small rewards according to their skill and industry.

On Sundays there were services, and a Sunday-school on the station, and all scholars, unless ill, attended them. The missionaries, according to

¹ See note 53, p. 358.

opportunity, health and weather, visited the neighbouring towns, both on week-days and Sundays, to hold services in them.

Bakula sometimes accompanied his white man on these preaching journeys to help in the singing at the services, and to carry a small load. At one place the people were so hostile that they would not allow the little party to remain in their village. They were not sufficiently courageous to demonstrate against the visitors with guns and knives, but were superstitious enough to drive them out with abuse, the shaking of their fetishes, and threats of what they would do if the white man and his boys tried to enter their village. It was a cold, wet evening, and the party was anything but cheerful sitting there in the bush with the rain falling in a continuous, monotonous patter about them.

Bakula now knew what it was to be misunderstood, and did not relish the experience. His intentions were friendly. Why were the people so foolish! He resented the treatment meted out to him and his white man, and, turning to the missionary, he said: "God is very strong, ask Him to punish these people severely for their conduct to us."

To him the teacher replied: "Supposing the white man had asked God to punish you and your

CLOTH WEAVING.

BLACKSMITHS.

people for driving him out of your town. Where would you be now? Not sitting there, but dead, without an opportunity of hearing of His great love. We will not ask God to punish them; but we will pray that He may do for these people what He has done for you, Satu, and your townsfolk: so change their hearts and superstitious thoughts about us that another day they will gladly invite us to stay in their town."

Before very long the rain had ceased, some grass and wood were collected, and the white man, soaking a paper with kerosene, and putting the grass and wood over it, soon had a blazing fire that thawed the hearts and tongues of the lads. In a few minutes they were laughing and joking as though they were in their cosy houses on the station, instead of being in the wet bush outside a hostile, inhospitable village with a very superstitious people shaking their charms at them not fifty yards away. Bakula never forgot this incident, and his constant prayer was: "O God, open the hearts of the people to understand Thy messengers and to receive Thy message."

Bakula was a great acquisition to the other boys on the station. He entered heartily into all their games, was a leader in many of their sports, and told them many a story around their evening fires.

His humorous, merry ways, his amusing manner in telling a story, his cheerful, obliging disposition, his common-sense way of looking at things, his marked ability in school, and his genuine earnestness made him the favourite of all on the station, both white and black. He had discarded all his charms and had learned that a lad's position was not due to them, but to his own disposition and willingness to oblige others.

One morning, when Bakula had been on the station about three years, he heard one of the white men give an address on the Parable of the Ten Virgins, and the narrative and teaching so stirred his heart with the fear that he would be left in the outer darkness, that all through the day he was unusually quiet, and at meal-times scarcely ate anything.

At night he started up more than once from horrid dreams with the awful words ringing in his ears: "I know you not." For several days he bore this soul agony, and at last resolved to lay the whole matter before his white friend.

It was easy to converse with the white man about pictures, *Mputu*, and many other palavers when other boys were about, or even alone; but Bakula shrank from talking about the inmost feelings of his heart, although he knew he would be listened to kindly and sympathetically. With

much shyness, therefore, he went one evening to his teacher and asked for a talk with him. He was received with a smile of welcome and taken into the white man's room, and the door was shut upon them. The white man had noticed Bakula's quietness, had partly surmised the reason, and was not surprised at the request for a talk on God's palaver.

Now that Bakula was sitting there he found it difficult to begin. When he opened his mouth no sound issued, for a lump seemed to rise in his throat and block the passage. His friend chatted to him until he felt more at ease, and then he poured out all the pent-up feelings of his heart, and gave expression to the thoughts of his long broodings. He told the white man of the address he had heard, of his dreams, of his fears that Christ would not know him, and of the many sins of adultery, robbery, cheating, lying and false accusation of which he had been guilty. He laid bare his whole previous life in all its ghastly wickedness until the white man felt it crowding on and pressing down his own soul.

Tears rolled down the lad's cheeks as he asked if God's Son would know such a guilty one as he, and could He forgive so many sins? The teacher spoke to him quietly and earnestly, read to him various passages from God's own Word, and, after

praying with him, dismissed him to his bed comforted and happy.

It was very late when Bakula left the white man's house, but it was quite early when he arose next morning from a refreshing sleep. The sun was shining not only on the hills and valleys around him, but also into his heart, and he could not repress one hymn he had learned in school, though he had never fully realized its beauty and meaning until now : " Jesus loves me, this I know ; for the Bible tells me so."

The boys who occupied the dormitory with him turned and asked : " What is the matter with you? "

" Oh, I had a long talk with the white man last night about God's palaver," he answered cheerfully, " and I feel very happy now." And at once he told them of the address, and pleaded with them to prepare for the coming of Christ, so that He might know them on His arrival.

Several months passed, during which time Bakula took part in the prayer meetings, and at the services of the Christian Band he often gave a short address. He was eager to accompany the teacher to the various towns in the neighbourhood, and frequently used the scars on his arm as a text. He then, with soul-earnestness and much eloquence, declaimed against the trickery and lies of

the witch-doctors, the uselessness of their charms, and the deception of their ordeals.

On one occasion the white man, Bakula, and some other lads were spending the evening in a town. The service was over, the teacher had retired to his hut, and Bakula and his companions had stretched themselves upon their mats in another hut that had been lent to them. During the night they were disturbed by the entrance of a witch-doctor, who hid something in a saucepan. Thinking he was up to one of his tricks, Bakula removed the thing and put it in another place.

In the morning the *nganga*, who was employed to destroy the power of an evil spirit that was troubling a family in the town, was up early shouting at the spirit to desist. He threatened it, fired his gun repeatedly at it, and after much rushing about and wild gesticulations, he declared at last that he had caught the evil spirit. He led the suffering family to the hut he had visited during the previous night, and entering it triumphantly, prepared his clients, by his boastful talk, for a great *dénouement*; but, behold, the entrapped spirit was gone.

When the lads, later in the day, brought out the "something," they found it was tied up in imitation of a corpse, and on opening it, discovered inside a piece of *kwanga*, or native bread, and

inside that a fowl's bladder full of blood. The lads had a hearty laugh over the incident, and their disbelief in *ngangas* was greatly strengthened by this exposure of their trickery.

If the witch-doctor had found the bundle where he had placed it, he would, after much incantation and dancing, have pierced it with his knife, and as the blood flowed from it he would have claimed to have trapped and killed the evil spirit. The deluded family would have paid him a large fee, and after a time, feeling no better, would have sent for another *nganga* and been deceived in another way. They were saved at least the payment of one large fee by the lads to whom they had lent the house.

The white men on the station watched Bakula very carefully, and often spoke about him to each other as one whose life and conduct showed that he was fully fit to be a member of the Church that had recently been formed there. But no pressure was put on him, as it was felt desirable, on account of the persecution all native Christians then suffered, that the request for baptism and Church membership should be entirely spontaneous.

After many months Bakula applied for baptism and entrance to the Church. He was told of all it might mean to him—persecution, ridicule, and perhaps death. But his answers were such that he

was duly received into the little Church, and with quivering heart and tears of joyous amazement in his eyes he partook for the first time of the Lord's Supper.

During these years he had paid more than one visit to his home. His mother had received him with hearty welcomes, Satu had had long and frequent talks with him about the white men and their teaching, and the lads and lasses in the town had regarded his accomplishments in reading and writing with awe, envy, and superstitious fear.

Old Plaited-Beard always looked at him askant, with eyes full of hatred and malignity; but Tumbu, his slave friend, never left his side during those visits except to sleep. He followed him like a faithful dog, with eyes full of admiration and humble love.

The time came at last for Bakula to return to his town and live there. He asked his white friend for a few slates, pencils, reading-sheets and spelling-books, as he had decided to start, if possible, a school among his own people. These were gladly given to him, and, taking farewell of his many friends, both black and white, he commenced his return journey.

How different was this last going from his first coming! The darkness had given place to the

light, the tangled, crooked path had become straight, though narrow and rough, and the evil spirits of fetishism no longer haunted his life with terror and horror, for they had been displaced by the ministering angels of God.

Chapter XXI

Bakula's Work checked

The conservatism of the Congo people—Bakula and his scholars build a school-house—A missionary visits his town—He encourages Bakula in his work—A "luck fowl" dies—Its death is put to the credit of the missionary's visit and teaching—The school-house is pulled down—Satu is afraid to interfere—Native way of punishing an unpopular chief.

BAKULA had not been back many days before he asked Satu for permission to open a school for the boys in the town. The chief gave his consent, but was very doubtful how the townsfolk would regard the innovation.

For untold generations they, their fathers, and their forefathers had gone on in the same way. They had built their huts with either grass, mud, or rough plank walls; they had scratched the ground on their farms with little hoes; and when ill in health, unlucky in fighting, trading, hunting or in domestic affairs, they had nearly sixty wizards, or "medicine men," to reverse their luck by their ceremonies, charms, fetishes and magical decoctions. They had kept their accounts with knots tied in strings, or notches cut on tallies; they had always hunted in the same way, fished in the

same way, traded, travelled, lived and died in the same way. What, therefore, was the use of changing now?

They were a very conservative people that had always killed off the progressives—those troublesome fellows who wanted to introduce new methods of building, new articles of trade, new ideas, and new ways of using old materials. Men who in other countries were called inventive geniuses were accounted horrible witches in Satu's town. The man who discovered the method of tapping palm-trees for palm-wine was killed as a witch; the men who first traded in rubber and ivory were regarded with suspicion, and treated as folk full of witchcraft; and the man who took the first load of gum copal to the traders was told never to take another, or he "would see plenty trouble."

It was in the midst of such a people that Bakula started his school. Tumbu, of course, attended it. Many other boys came out of curiosity, and finding no magic in it, no short-cut to book learning, their ardour cooled, and they dropped away; and there were no school inspectors to inflict fines and penalties for non-attendance. A few had sufficient courage and perseverance to attend regularly, and these made some progress in the mastery of their letters and syllables.

Bakula so enthused his few scholars that at the end of the dry season they decided to band together and build a grass hut in which to hold their school during the coming rains. It was no small bit of work for a few lads, with poor tools, to undertake. Rafters, king posts, stanchions, and wall plates had to be cut in the forests and conveyed into the town on their heads or shoulders; grass must be cut, dried, combed and carried from the bush to the site; and string had to be prepared from forest vines and swamp reeds.

Then there was a floor to be raised and beaten, holes to be dug, and all the materials fitted and tied together to form the hut. It was a simple structure with no windows, but a large door that answered all purposes, and the boys were proud of it. If you had seen it you might have laughed at it; but could you have built a better one with the same tools and materials?

Every morning the school was opened with prayer, singing, and the reading of a portion from the Gospel of Matthew—the only Gospel then translated into the language of the people. Occasionally men and women came, and, standing about the door, listened to the simple service. Many ridiculed the whole palaver; a few, however, were impressed, and came repeatedly; and, encouraged by them, Bakula started a Sunday

service; but out of more than 1,500 people in the town, only from ten to twenty attended it.

One day Bakula's heart was gladdened by the arrival of one of the missionaries on his way from the Ngombe district to the King's town. He was trying to open up the country, visiting the towns and preaching in them as opportunity offered. Satu welcomed him heartily, and Bakula and his small class of scholars were delighted to see him. The missionary examined the school, and by his presence and words of praise encouraged the teacher and his pupils to continue their efforts.

The white man had long talks with Satu, and suggested that the next day a crier should be sent through the town to invite the people to come and hear God's palaver. The time, however, was not ripe for such a service, for only a few responded, and they came more to ingratiate themselves with their chief than to listen to the white man.

This white man was a zealous teacher, thoroughly in earnest and well acquainted with the people's language. No opportunity was missed by him of speaking to the twos and threes. Here he was to be found in conversation with some swaggering young men, there talking to a few old men, and again in another place arguing with some of the head men. He was a man of great attainments and wide knowledge, yet he exhibited

no annoyance as he dealt with their puny reasoning, and unfolded the weak places in their arguments. He was like a giant handling pigmies, tenderly and persuasively. Bakula was sorry when his visitor had to pass on his way to other towns, and to open up the road across country upon which his heart was set; but the young teacher never forgot the words of encouragement he received from the white man in their private talks.

A short time after this visit the "luck fowl" (or *nsusu a zumbi*) belonging to one of the head men died without any apparent reason. It had probably eaten unwisely, or had been bitten by a snake; but the owner put it to the credit of the white men who had just visited their town. Everybody remembered that, immediately after the promised visit of the white man whom they had previously driven out of the town, a pig died.

They argued thus: "A white man came to us with God's palaver, and a pig died soon after he left; another white man came on the same errand, and before many days had passed a 'luck fowl' died, therefore it was most foolish to have anything to do with God's palaver." They conveniently forgot all the pigs and "luck fowls" that had died before the white men ever came near them, and only remembered these two that had died after their visits.

There was a great to-do in the town over the unfortunate death of this "luck fowl." The owner raved against the school that had been opened by Bakula, against the visits of the white men, and against the introduction of new ideas of any kind. The more superstitious folk in the place combined to close the school and pull down the school-house. Many were indifferent to the whole matter, and a few were for letting the boys alone. There was much discussion; but the party for the "medicine men," the fetishes, the charms, and for maintaining the *status quo* being the larger, the noisier, and more dominant faction, gained their point, and, while demolishing the school, destroyed as many books and slates as fell into their possession.

Poor Bakula was nonplussed by this calamity, and the other boys for a time were disheartened; but there is a great amount of grit and determination in the Congo character, and before long the lads were meeting in Bakula's house for their lessons and for such teaching as their young tutor could give them.

Satu, the chief, tried to stem the current of popular feeling and turn it away from Bakula, but he failed even to save the school-house. Native chiefs have power only to make the people do what they want to do; and they generally have

to bow their heads before the whirlwinds of popular sentiment and feeling. This was Satu's case. Neither his heart nor his intellect had been awakened by the new teaching, consequently he was not yet prepared to suffer either abuse or unpopularity for the sake of God's palaver and all that it meant.

The natives have a way of their own in punishing an unpopular chief, as the following incident will show, which I heard a man relate one day to Bakula with much laughter: There was a chief of a neighbouring village who treated his people very contemptuously, and was always, on one pretext or another, exacting fowls, cloth or other goods from them. They bore patiently with him as long as possible, but at last his unreasonable demands became too excessive; so one day they bound him securely, placed him on a shelf in his own house, made a fire under him, and having sprinkled a quantity of red pepper on the fire, went out and shut the door.

The chief sneezed tremendously, and would have died if sufficient pepper had been put on the fire. After a time they took him out of the smoke and tied his extended arms to a cross-stick, and would have punished him further; but he paid a heavy fine, and has been much better since the sneezing cure was tried on him.

Chapter XXII

Bakula Falsely Accused and Murdered

Failure of various remedies—Witch-doctor engaged—Diagnosing a case—Different “medicine men” are called in—Bakula denounces their trickery—Suspicion of witchcraft falls on Bakula—Native attempts to rid themselves of death, sickness, etc.—Preparing a corpse for the grave—Bakula is accused of bewitching his mother to death—He is guarded by Old Plaited-Beard through the night—He is taken to the hill-top.—He falls and is done to death—Tumbu buries the mangled body of his friend.

A FEW weeks after the closing of the school, as narrated in the preceding chapter, Bakula's mother fell seriously ill of a chest complaint. Many remedies were tried, but failed to relieve her. Some neighbourly women sat with her by day and attended her at night, and numberless were the sure cures they recommended; but although applied they proved utterly futile. Her family at last decided, much against the wish of Bakula, to send for the “medicine man” who cures by herbs, fetishes and charms. He was called *ngang'a wuka*.

As already stated,¹ each of these various *ngangas* (and there are nearly sixty different

¹ See Chapter VII.

kinds) must find his way to the village and to the house of his client without either guidance or instruction, and he must also discover the disease from which his patient is suffering or the cause of death without asking a single direct question.

In due time the "medicine man" arrived in front of his patient's house, having reached it by the usual stratagem of his assistant dropping leaves and twigs to indicate the road. He was a stout man with shrewd, quick, shifty eyes, and was dressed in the usual fantastic style, and carried a bag of charms slung from his shoulder. He seated himself outside the sick woman's house, and a crowd quickly formed a circle round him.

The native "doctor" in diagnosing the case could not ask any direct questions of his patient—in fact she was in the house and he sat outside; but he met that difficulty thus: He asked a series of indirect questions, and when those present said "Ndungu" he knew he was on the wrong tack, and when they replied "Otuama" he knew at once he was guessing rightly, and the more excitedly they called out the latter word the nearer he knew he was to the truth, and the more indifferently they uttered "Ndungu" the farther he understood he was from the real complaint. Hence he started in this way—

"There are such things as backaches and headaches." "Ndungu," quietly said the folk.

"Sometimes there are pains in the legs." "Ndungu," was very coldly uttered by the crowd. The *nganga* recognized that he was on the wrong scent; but still he had managed to narrow the circle of affected parts, so he began again.

"There are such things as pains in the arms and thighs." "Ndungu," indifferently replied the people.

"Sometimes there are pains in the chest and stomach." "Otuama," uttered the poor folk.

He now knew his patient was suffering either from a bad stomach or chest, and he continued to narrow it down in this manner until at last he said: "Ah! her chest is very bad." The people excitedly shouted, "Otuama," snapped their fingers, and looked at the *nganga* with awe-filled eyes.

The "doctor" now knew that his patient's chest was the seat of the trouble. What are the most common complaints of the chest? Hacking coughs, asthma, bronchitis, pleurisy, and pneumonia. So he started off to discover the particular disease from which the woman was suffering and the part affected. The people coldly said "Ndungu" when he missed his guess, or frantically called out "Otuama"; by this cunning

process he narrowed the circle smaller and smaller, until at last, to their astonishment, he said: "The woman is suffering from pleurisy (*ntulu*) on the right side of the chest."

The people thought that such a clever man, who had found out all about the disease without being told and without seeing the patient, was just the person to cure the complaint. He was consequently engaged at once and well paid. He made no proper examination of the patient, but took out some of his herbs and charms, and beating them into a paste told them to rub the woman's chest with the preparation.

After two or three days, Bakula's mother feeling no better, the family sent to *ngang' a moko*. The messenger who went to her, for this witch-doctor is generally a woman, took with him a red bead which he gave to the *nganga*, who put it under her pillow that she might in a dream discover the cause of her patient's complaint—whether it is a mere ailment, or a bewitchment by some evil spirit.

The *nganga* received her fee of one good fowl and fifty brass rods, and that night placed the bead beneath her pillow; but whether she dreamed or not I do not know. However, in the morning she told the messenger that the first "doctor" was unable to effect a cure because

278 Bakula Falsely Accused and Murdered

some one was bewitching the sick woman, and the family must send for a wizard to kill the evil spirit that was troubling her, and then she would soon recover from her complaint.

When the message was delivered Bakula, who was standing by, at once denounced the cheating trickery of the *ngangas*, and told how he, with others, had exposed one of these spirit-killing wizards in a certain town. He explained the whole process even to the piece of *kwanga* wrapped up to imitate a corpse, with the fowl's bladder of blood inside. The people looked at him with horror-stricken eyes, recoiled from him in terror, and with raised fingers accused him of being a *ndoki*, or evil spirit, as otherwise he could not have meddled with the *nganga* and his things and not have suffered for it.

Bakula denied the cruel charge; but from that day he was regarded by the people with unfriendly suspicion, and was shunned by them. But for his slave friend, Tumbu, and his former scholars he would have led a very lonely life.

The spirit-killing witch-doctor was called, and made the night hideous with his shouts, threats, screams and gun-firing. He worked hard at his craft, received his fee and went; but the poor woman still continued ill, and, in fact, became much worse—the pain at her right side was acute,

the breathing difficult, and the fever high. Her moaning was continuous, and the women who attended her knew not what to do for her relief. They were unskilled nurses and lacked knowledge rather than the feminine qualities of caring for the sick. There were no foods for invalids, no dainties to tempt a patient's appetite—the sick had either to eat what the robust and healthy ate or go without. Many patients have died of hunger rather than of the diseases from which they suffered.

The practice of the witch-doctor was sheer quackery, and rested more on the exorcism of evil spirits by magical charms, incantations and concoctions, than on a knowledge of physiology, disease and medicine. The wonder was that any one survived the various treatments, and, in fact, only the fittest and strongest did recover from serious illnesses.

Bakula's mother continued to grow worse. How he wished they were near the mission station, where she could have the help of those who cured his oil-scalded arm and nursed him so carefully; but the station was too far away! He attended his mother assiduously, and would have done more for her, but the women drove him out of the hut with jeers and curses, after his denouncement of the witch-doctor and their tricks. Poor creatures!

280 Bakula Falsely Accused and Murdered

they knew no better, they were doing their very best for the patient. They were simply safeguarding her from one whom they thought was full of witchcraft.

Another "doctor" was called, among whose outfit were several traps especially made for catching evil spirits. Having put a little fowl's blood into each of the traps, he placed them around the doors of the house in which the sick woman was tossing in her efforts to breathe freely. He then pounded some herbs and chalk together, mixed them in palm-wine, and giving the patient this decoction to drink, sat down to watch the entrance of any evil spirit into his traps, disguised as cockroaches or spiders. Although he caught and killed several of the supposed evil spirits, *i. e.* several spiders and cockroaches, and therefore, according to his statements, the woman would now recover quickly, yet she grew worse.

In their desperation the family sent for yet another wizard who had the power to converse with spirits, and consequently was able to ask them why they were inflicting so bad an illness on the suffering woman! He came with his fetish, and, before locking himself in a house, told the people that they would see the house shake as he talked with the spirits. The family sat around the place listening and watching intently.

In a short time they saw the hut quivering and heard the *bitodi* fetish speaking and the spirits talking, and the answering voices were male and female, old and young.

After a long consultation between the *nganga's* *bitodi* fetish and the spirits (*nkwiya*), the wizard came out, and said : " Some member of the family is guilty of breaking the country customs, laughing at *ngangas*, and throwing his (or her) charms away, consequently this sickness has come as a punishment. This same member has also a *ndoki* (or evil spirit), and whoever it is must bless the patient so as to remove the evil influence from her."

Suspicion instantly fell on my owner, Bakula, for who else had broken the country customs but he ! Had he not learned to read ! Had he not accepted the white man's palaver, and renounced his charms ! Had he not laughed at *ngangas* and denounced their rites and ceremonies as cheating tricks !

Bakula was dragged into the hut to bless his mother. He solemnly took her right hand and, pretending to spit on it, said : " May you have blessing and good fortune." Then he was hurried out of the room of his dying mother.

This particular "doctor," to prove his *bona fides*, had heated a machet red hot three times,

282 Bakula Falsely Accused and Murdered

and had drawn it each time across his tongue. What better proof did the natives need than this of the *nganga's* magical power to converse with spirits? He received a large fee of more than ten shillings' worth of trade goods, and went his way, leaving his victim to bear the brunt of the family's vengeance.

The *nganga* had not been gone many hours when the woman breathed her last, and poor Bakula was left motherless. His neighbours and relatives eyed his sorrow with contemptuous suspicion, and already began to whisper among themselves that he was the *ndoki* (or evil spirit) who had caused his own mother's death. They thoughtlessly disregarded the true affection that the young man had always shown for his mother, his readiness to help her, and his sincere grief now that she was gone. They only considered and repeated to each other what the witch-doctor had said about breaking the country customs, laughing at wizards, and neglecting his charms. They could regard him in no other light than as the real cause of his mother's illness and death.

For generations they and their forefathers had believed that disease and death were unnatural, and would not exist on the earth for a single day if there were no wickedly-disposed persons who

used evil spirits to kill their relatives by incurable diseases. They did not know that their "medicine men" covered their ignorance, quackeries and failures by these charges of witchcraft. If a patient recovered, then they inflated themselves with pride and took all the credit of the cure; but if the patient died, then witchcraft was at work, a *ndoki* was "eating" up the patient, or by his evil spirit was throttling the spirit of the sick one. Rich men had bought expensive charms, had sacrificed goats and sheep to costly fetishes to keep them strong and alert, to protect their owners from the evil influences of the *ndoki*, and yet they had died.

Such deaths did not shake their faith in charms and fetishes, but rather stimulated them to more careful observance of all the rites and ceremonies connected with them. They knew no better system than that in which they had been nurtured.

One night when Bakula was sitting around the fire I heard that two men many years ago had started a crusade against fetishes and charms. They preached throughout the Lower Congo that if all fetishes and charms of every kind were destroyed there would be no more disease and death. So effective was their condemnation of witchcraft, charms, and fetishes that whole towns

and villages made bonfires of their images and charms, and children were shaken over the fires to purge them from any charms concealed about their person.

The deluded natives expected a golden day would now dawn upon them wherein there would be no sighing, no tears, no weeping, for disease and death would be banished from their huts; but, alas! sickness soon came and death quickly followed to disillusion them of their bright hopes.

The only folk who profited by this crusade were the *ngangas*, as they received large orders for charms and fetishes to replace those that had been burned. But the preachers were sure of the soundness of their panacea for the country's woes, and they could only account for its failure by charging some of the people with hiding their charms and fetishes instead of destroying them.

Later still, two other men who were *ngangas*, calling themselves by some high-sounding titles, started another crusade; this time not against charms and fetishes, but against evil desires and murderous thoughts harboured in the hearts of the people. They proclaimed that every one should confess to them all the witchcraft, hatred, and bad thoughts they had in their hearts against others, and those thus confessing should receive

CAT'S CRADLES.

A PROTECTIVE FETISH.

a peanut and a sip of palm-wine, and thus disease and death would pass away from their country.

Large numbers flocked to them, paid their fees—five strings of beads for an adult, and two for a child—confessed their hatred, witchcraft, and evil thoughts, and received from the hands of the new cult of "medicine men" the peanut and palm-wine, and yearningly hoped that sickness had been banished from their district and death destroyed. But again they were quickly undeceived, for disease continued rampant and death entered hut after hut. The "medicine men" reaped a great harvest of beads, swaggered in wealth, and excused the failure of their system by saying "that the people had not confessed *all* their witchcraft and hatred, and consequently, not being cleansed from *all*, the old state of things had continued, and people suffered and died as before."

Thus the people had had their hopes again and again dashed to the ground, and they had been flung back on their old "medicine men" and their fetishes. It has always been a tenet of their religion that sickness and death were and are caused by witchcraft, and the most hated person in all the country is he (or she) who, by the ordeal, is proved to practise witchcraft. Hold their

views, and the tenderest heart will hate and kill the witch as mercilessly as they did.

There is no doubt but that the *ngangas* received bribes to render the ordeal non-effective; that the big men of the town incited the ordinary folk to bring charges of witchcraft against their enemies, or those whom they wanted removed from their path; and the witch-doctors themselves, by the aid of their assistants, fostered and turned suspicion against those who desired to introduce a new and better state of things into the country. Their position and gains depended on killing off all such dangerous people. Hence the ordeal and the charge of witchcraft were often simply acts of murder, according to the customs of the country if you like, but nevertheless murder.

The whole of the morning following the death of Bakula's mother was spent in decorating the corpse for burial. Beads were twisted round the toes, feet, legs, body, arms, hands, fingers and neck, thus enswathing the whole of the deceased in a casing of glass beads. Fold after fold of trade cloths of different colours and qualities were wound round and round the body until it was nearly twice its original bulk. At sunset the corpse was carried to the grave, just outside the town, and laid to rest with the hum of town life on one side, and the weird, uncanny noises of the

eternal bush on the other; but the soul had gone to that mysterious spirit town in the great forest where it would utilize all the cloth and beads in which it had been wrapped.

All through the day women had wailed and chanted mournful dirges, men had fired off guns amid much laughter and many jokes, and Bakula, with tearful eyes, had talked in subdued tones to his slave friend.

He had often, in the days gone by, conversed with his mother about the white man's palaver concerning God and His great gift of Jesus Christ. He had poured out his heart to her, had instructed her in all that he had learned on the station, and had repeated to her portions of God's Word.

He now recalled the eagerness with which she had heard the words: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son"; and, "In My Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you"; and he was hopeful of meeting her, not in the mysterious forest town that had so many terrors for them, and which was simply a repetition of their earthly life and its sorrows, but in the Father's house where all tears would be wiped away from their eyes, all sin banished from their lives, and all sorrow from their hearts. He grieved not as one without hope.

288 Bakula Falsely Accused and Murdered

Not many days after the funeral the witchfinder arrived, dressed in his fantastic garb, his body decorated with gaudy paints and pigments, and his bells tinkling at every movement. A crowd quickly gathered and formed itself into a long oval, up and down the centre of which he danced. The whole town, with few exceptions, regarded Bakula as a witch, and the prancing figure there in the middle knew it. Still, he must give his employers something for their money, so through the whole long hours of the afternoon he gyrated perspiringly, threw his arms and legs about in the most approved fashion, put question after question and elicited such answers as confirmed his opinion that it would be extremely popular and safe to charge this ridiculer of witchdoctors, this scorner of fetishes and charms, this believer in the new religion with the death of his mother—the woman who had just died.

Bakula was present throughout the whole performance. Hour after hour he stood calmly there. As a member of the family he was compelled to be present; but he took no part in answering the crafty questions put by the grotesque figure dancing before him.

Towards the latter part of the afternoon he noticed that the people were withdrawing from him; they seemed to shun the spot where he stood,

all except his faithful slave friend. He trembled as he observed these signs of popular resentment, for he fully recognized their meaning.

Towards sunset the witch-doctor increased his efforts to the admiration of the spectators. He leaped in the air, gyrated on his heels, flung his arms and legs about in amazing circles, crouched and jumped, undulated his body to simulate a python, and in a whirlwind of shaking skins, twirling arms and legs, and sounding bells he brought himself to a sudden halt in front of Bakula, and with raised finger accused him of bewitching his mother to death.

Poor Bakula ! although he had fully expected this charge, he was dumbfounded now he stood accused before all the people. He essayed to speak, but no words issued from his parched, dry throat, and he would have fallen if Tumbu had not supported him in his strong arms.

Why had they accused him of killing his mother by witchcraft? Accused *him* of *her* death ! It was ridiculous, cruel, wicked ! Surely no Congo mother had ever before been loved by a son as she had been loved ! The very teaching he had imbibed had taught him to honour, reverence and love his parents. If he had lied, robbed, lived a loose life and treated his mother with contemptuous indifference like other young men in the town,

he would not have stood there charged with killing his mother by witchcraft.

The crowd surged around him. What ugly, sinister faces were pushed jeeringly into his! Sticks were raised and knives drawn to strike down the witch; but Satu pushed himself in front of the victim, and demanded that he should not be killed until the ordeal test had been given him.

"He will escape in the night to the white man's station," they shouted.

"No, he won't," said Old Plaited-Beard, "for I will bind him strongly and watch him through the night, if you will hand him over to me."

This met with the instant approval of the crowd, and Bakula was handed over to the guardianship of his superstitious and merciless enemy.

Old Plaited-Beard, with the help of a few friends, took the accused youth to his hut, and with strong cords bound his hands, feet and legs. No tenderness was displayed in the tying; that the cords cut into the flesh was regarded by the tiers with utter unconcern.

To render escape doubly impossible the prisoner's neck was securely fastened in a forked stick.

All through the long night the men took it in

turns to watch Bakula, who, by reason of his strained position and tortured limbs, had no proper sleep, but dozed fitfully in painful semi-consciousness. Now and again he sang in a poor quavering voice the hymns he had learned on the station and had taught his few boys in their little school; occasionally he prayed for strength and comfort, and once he attempted to speak to his captors about the great Saviour—God's wonderful gift to the world.

It was not until they threatened to ram a lighted stick into his mouth—and held one very near to his lips to emphasize their threat—that he turned from them to sing: "Jesus, Lover of my soul, Let me to Thy bosom fly."

Early the next afternoon Bakula was released from his bonds, and led away to the top of a neighbouring hill. The rude hut was quickly built, and the victim placed in it with extended arms. The ordeal-giver ground the pieces of bark into powder, and fed the young man with them. Before he had taken many of the powders Bakula began to feel intoxicated by their narcotic properties. He swayed to and fro like a drunken man, his vision became blurred, foam came from his mouth, and at last he fell a writhing heap on the ground. Sticks and knives immediately finished the cruel, murderous deed, and the

corpse, naked, battered and covered with gaping wounds, was left a prey to wild beasts and ravenous birds.

Again the stars arose and looked with blinking, sorrowful gaze on that tragic hill-top—the scene of many an ordeal murder, and as they looked they saw a strange sight : coming across the hill was a lad carrying a hoe. He carefully scanned every boulder, tuft of grass and shrub, and at last his eyes fell on the body of the lifeless lad. With a cry he bounded to its side and sank prostrate to the ground, and grovelled in heart-stricken sorrow by the side of his murdered friend.

When his grief had somewhat spent itself Tumbu arose and began to dig a grave for the body of his admired benefactor. It was a fearsome place, strewn with bones—the remnants of many trials by ordeal ; and weird noises, trying to the stoutest heart, came on the night air from the near forest. Tumbu started many a time during his self-imposed task, and fear gripped his heart more than once ; but he steadied himself by driving his hoe deeply into the earth, and working hard to save the body of his kind friend from the cruel, sharp teeth of savage beasts.

At last the grave was deep enough, and then Tumbu, spreading some cloth he had brought for

the purpose, laid the body of his friend upon it; but before wrapping it around him he took the Brass Rod from Bakula's neck, intending to keep it as a memento of his slain friend.

Tenderly were the remains laid in the grave, and the earth covered all that was left of my whilom companion and martyred owner.

Chapter XXIII

I Find many Changes

Mikula while digging the foundations for a brick house discovers me—The town is changed—There is daily worship—Observance of the sabbath—Sunday service—Collections for support of teachers—Christian funeral—Visit to the mission station—Teaching teachers—Martyrs for the cause.

[Fifteen years are supposed to have elapsed between the concealment and the unearthing of the Brass Rod.

The preceding part of this narrative unfolds the prejudices, superstitions and evil practices rife on the Congo thirty years ago, while the following chapters indicate the progress that has been made in christianizing the people and leading them to higher and better things.]

AFTER burying Bakula on that sad night, Tumbu carried me back to his hut; but being afraid to wear me lest he should be accused of robbing a dead body, he secretly polished me, and, wrapping me in an old rag, concealed me beneath the earth in a corner of his house, hoping no doubt some day, when all fear of detection had

passed away, to take me out and wear me in memory of his friend.

How long I lay buried I know not; but my finder was a sturdily built, pleasant-faced young man whose name I heard later was Mikula. When he had rubbed me clean of all my accumulated dirt, and found that I was good solid brass, he well polished my sides and wound me in graceful rings round his wrist.

I discovered afterwards that my new owner was digging the foundations of a brick house when he happened upon me. Mikula had been taught on the mission station, and had learned there, among other things, the arts of brickmaking and brick-laying, and now he had returned to his home he was busy building a brick house into which he hoped to bring his future wife. He had already made and burnt several thousands of bricks, and was hurrying forward the building of the walls so as to roof in the house before the rainy season commenced.

What a change had passed over the town! I scarcely recognized it for the same place. Here and there were comfortable brick houses, a few plank ones, and many others of wattle and daub nicely colour-washed, while the grass huts were larger and very neatly made. And as Mikula walked through the town that evening I noticed

that many of the homes were lighted either with candles or lamps, and families—father, mother and children—were sitting around one common table partaking together of their food; those families that could not afford artificial light sat together round their fires.

Occasionally we came upon some who maintained the old state of things—broken up families, the male and female members of which still sat and ate their food apart from each other.

At six o'clock every morning a small bell rang out, calling the natives to morning prayers before they started their daily employments. Mikula, who was a deacon of the Church, had charge of the religious work in his own town, and performed voluntarily the duties of a pastor of the Church and teacher of the school.

About a hundred men, women and young people gathered every morning for worship—a hymn was sung, a portion of the New Testament was read and commented on, a short prayer was offered either by Mikula or one of the Christians, and another hymn brought the simple service to a close. After that the women went to their farms and the men to their various occupations. Who can measure the influence such services exerted over the lives of the folk who attended them? Their horizon was no longer confined to the trivial

affairs of their former mean lives, but extended to the boundless reaches of heaven and God's own eternity; their thoughts no longer grovelled in the trough of lustful desires and evil passions, but were lifted to higher, purer and more spiritual concerns; and their aims were no longer wholly selfish—set on attaining many women and much wealth,—but they gave their time, energy and money that their heathen neighbours might enjoy the same blessings that had come into their lives, and had transformed them, by a wondrous alchemy, from base metal to beautiful gold.

On Sundays the Christians refrained from farm work, visiting the markets, trading, and any other form of labour that would desecrate the Lord's day; and a large number of those who were not professing Christians also observed the day; but there were still many who clung to the old state of things, who farmed, toiled and traded on that day as though they had never heard of a day of rest.

During the Sabbath afternoon the bell rang out, and more than three hundred natives attended the service which was held in a large brick building that had been raised and paid for by the native Christians themselves. What a pride they seemed to take in their "House of God"! The walls were colour-washed and decorated with pictures

of the life of Christ; the doors and windows, which were of native carpentry, were nicely painted, and the roof was of corrugated iron sheets that they had bought with their own hard-earned money. There stood their "House of God" on the finest site, in the very heart of the town.

What a contrast to Bakula's little grass school-chapel that had been so ruthlessly destroyed by some of the very people who had laboured to erect this new building! Yet the latter, and all it stood for, was the outcome of the former.

That Sunday was a Communion day—the first sabbath of the month. Mikula, as deacon-pastor, took the service. Native Christians living in the surrounding villages had walked to this centre to take the Communion. The meetings in their own villages had been postponed, and, headed by their teachers, some of them had marched across hills and dales, forded streams and waded swamps to be present at that service.

Many of them had walked from five to nine hours from the more distant parts of their district. They were in earnest, and expecting a blessing they did not return disappointed. The building was not large enough to contain all who attended, so the overflow sat round the windows and doors that they might share in the service.

How heartily they sang! What prayers they

offered—not wholly for themselves, but also for their neighbours that they too might be saved. How attentively they listened to Mikula's teaching, on "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." They were an agricultural people, and knew the truthfulness of the lessons their teacher enforced with eloquent directness, and wealth of illustration taken from their own daily work on the farms.

The first service over, those who were not in Church membership left to make room for those who had come so far to take the Communion. Soon the place was full again, and Mikula, assisted by the teachers, dispensed the bread and the cup. Close upon two hundred that afternoon commemorated the death of their Lord and Saviour.

During the former service the usual collection had been made, and at the close of the Communion Service the teachers from the various towns handed over to the deacons the amounts that had been received at the gatherings during the previous month. Every Church member was expected to give according to his or her ability for the support of the native teachers who prosecuted the local missionary work. And the gifts from the different towns and villages were recorded in the deacons' books, and the offerings of the

Church members were written in the diaries Sunday by Sunday by the teachers in charge.

Apparently, from what I heard, two things have been recognized from the beginning by the white men who founded the work at the various centres : (1) that Congo is too big a land for white men only to evangelize, hence the need for an ever-increasing supply of native teachers and preachers; and (2) that if you want a person to appreciate anything, let them pay for it, for what costs nothing is very soon valued at about the same price—nothing; hence every member of the native Church has been taught to give freely and generously for the propagation of the gospel among the villages. No native Christian is financially bettered by joining the Church; but it costs him or her something every week to be a member. These gifts are the expression of their appreciation of what Christ has done for them.

I would that Bakula could have attended that Communion Service. He would have felt well repaid for all his toil, anxieties, disappointments and death. And who shall say that his spirit was not hovering over and witnessing the wondrous sight? How I should have liked to have asked about Old Plaited-Beard, Satu, Tumbu and many another, but the natives were very reticent in speaking about their dead.

I recognized among the communicants some who had been taught by Bakula in the old school hut. Of course they were grown into young men, and a few of them were married and had children toddling about their knees.

Two or three weeks after the Communion described above, a message was brought to Mikula that an old man, a member of the Church, had just died, and would he go and bury him. Mikula fully recognized that this was one of his duties as a deacon of the Church, and readily promised to conduct the service on the afternoon of the next day.

On arriving in the village of the deceased man, Mikula went straight to the house of mourning, and spoke a few kindly, comforting words to the widow who was weeping silently by the corpse of her lost one. A few young men picked up the body and carried it reverently to the little chapel.

It was an unpretentious building of wattle and daub, colour-washed and clean—a house of comfort and strength, a place of worship to the few souls in that village who professed the Christian faith. In front of the small platform the body was laid, and over it were spread some palm-fronds—symbols of joy and victory.

Mikula conducted a simple service, and spoke with much tenderness and force to the heathen

present, on "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." They listened attentively, and more than one man dated his conversion to that address. At the grave a hymn of triumph was sung, and then the poor wasted body was laid to rest with these beautiful words as its shroud: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

No drunken orgies, no dissipated feasts, no sensual dances accompanied this funeral; neither was it followed by any smelling out of witches, nor charges of witchcraft, nor giving of the ordeal, nor the leaving on some neighbouring hill-top the stabbed body of a murdered man. Death was now dressed in another garb, wore a different aspect, for it was now regarded not as the result of malignant witchcraft, but the call of the Father to His child to occupy one of the places in the many mansions. Consequently there were no howls of rage, no wails of despair, no sinister threats of vengeance over the body of the deceased, but the palm-fronds, the hymns, the promise of a sure and certain resurrection, and the assurance that the absent one was present with the Lord—the dead had received eternal life.

Mikula hurried forward the completion of his

house, as he desired to visit the station for the week of special teaching periodically arranged for teachers, deacons and Christian workers. Soon after we started on the road we were joined at different points by teachers and deacons whose faces, like my owner's, were turned towards their Jerusalem—the Mission Station.

We arrived on Saturday afternoon, and were cordially welcomed by the white men, not one of whom I recognized as being on the station when Bakula lived there. I heard that some of them had died and were buried on the hillside overlooking a quiet peaceful valley, and others, broken by health, had been compelled to leave the country; but whether dead or sick, their work was being prosecuted with zeal by those who had taken their places.

The foundations so well and truly laid were now receiving the superstructure, the corner-stone of which was Christ. Other men had laboured, and these had entered into their labours; would they not all rejoice together when the top-stone was placed amid the shouts of men and angels?

The lessons began in earnest on Monday morning, and for the next five days the teachers and others present received five hours a day of special instruction in such subjects as would help them in

their work as teachers and leaders of the people—sermon-making, pastoral theology, Church history, hygiene, astronomy, geography, and a thorough study of one of the Gospels. Each attendant had his exercise-book, and opportunities were given for taking copious notes. These afterwards became the bases of many of the addresses they delivered to their people in the numerous little chapels dotted about the districts.

There were early morning prayer-meetings, the usual morning services, and public meetings on two or three evenings during the week. Between the lectures the teachers discussed with the white man who had charge of their particular district the peculiar difficulties of their spheres of labour, and sought counsel and guidance on knotty biblical, doctrinal, or other questions.

It was a busy time for all, white and native teachers alike; but it was of untold value to the latter, and undoubtedly exerted a great and beneficial influence on their life and labours. On the Sunday following the week of lectures, the Communion was taken; and the teachers returned strengthened, mentally and spiritually, to their work.

On Monday morning my owner, Mikula, bought a supply of various simple medicines to take back to his town, and he also asked for and received

1. TEACHERS WORKING UNDER THE WATHEN CHURCH.

2. DEACONS OF THE WATHEN CHURCH.

some slates, pencils, and reading-books to meet the demands of his numerous scholars. By noon he and the others had said "Good-bye" to their friends, white and black, and were on the road again with their faces turned homewards. Mikula moved with a buoyant step, for his heart was light and happy. His work as a deacon, teacher and preacher had received the commendation of his white man; and he was returning home to be married—to take to his house, which had cost him so much time, thought and labour, the girl of his choice, one who had been taught on the station, was a member of the Church, and sympathized with him in all his work.

During the evening, while we were sitting round the fire, the conversation turned on the days when much superstitious opposition and prejudice existed against the Christian religion, and witch-doctors and their followers exerted their combined forces to crush it. Mikula told of one zealous teacher he knew who travelled the country proclaiming God's message of salvation, who was seen to enter a town, but was never known to leave it. False and misleading reports were spread concerning him; but after a long period the truth came to light: the evangelist went into the said town to preach, the people seized him, hurried him down the long slope to the river, fastened a great

stone to his neck, and, hurling him from the rocks, drowned him in the rushing waters.

"A few months ago," said one of the teachers sitting round the fire, "the people in a town I visited caught me and tied me with my arms extended on a cross in mockery of my Master; then they placed me for hours out in the broiling sun, so that my mouth and throat became parched and dry like the bottom of a saucepan. As the sun went down they set me free, and we have a teacher and some Christians now in that town, for they were astonished to hear me praying for them instead of abusing them."

"Have you heard what happened some months ago in the district next to ours?" asked another. "An evangelist went into a town, and the natives took him and stretched him on a cross in imitation of our Saviour, and then, spearing him, they cut off his head and flung his body into the bush. Christ suffered much for our salvation, and it is to be expected that we shall have to suffer a little for Him."

As they sat there round the fire two or three engaged in prayer, and singing softly their evening hymn—"Jesus, Lover of my soul, Let me to Thy bosom fly," they rolled themselves in their blankets, and there in the open around their fires they stretched themselves in sleep.

Chapter XXIV

A Marriage and a Harvest Festival

A Christian wedding—Grateful offerings—Christianity a great boon to the women—Reunion—Various meetings—Lady missionaries conduct services—Auction sale of the gifts—Changed lives—Mikula instructs a stranger in the way of salvation—Rules for candidates and for Church fellowship.

A FEW days after Mikula's return he was married to the young woman for whom he had built the brick house. In honour of the occasion the church was prettily decorated with flowers, long streamers of vine-like branches and palm-fronds. A bower was made by arching some palm-fronds, and beneath this were placed two chairs, tied together, symbolical of the future state of those who were to sit upon them.

The town was all agog with the excitement of the event, every seat and standing place was occupied, and the doors and windows were crowded with black but smiling faces.

This was the first time that a deacon-teacher had been married in their town, and as the bridegroom was much honoured by Christians and heathen alike for his happy, kindly, obliging

disposition and straightforward, consistent life among them, they had come in large numbers to his wedding.

The bride was arrayed in a clean muslin dress of a bright but pretty pattern—the gift of her white lady teacher as a recognition of her helpful work among the girls during her stay upon the station. The bridegroom was dressed in a nice blue loin cloth and white jacket, the latter being the work of one of his neighbours who was expert with the needle.

A fellow deacon had come from a neighbouring town to perform the ceremony. A marriage hymn was sung and was followed by two teachers asking for God's blessing on those about to be married; then the deacon read a translation of the marriage service, during which the bride and bridegroom took each other's hand and solemnly pledged themselves to one another until death. Another hymn and prayer, and the benediction concluded the simple but impressive service.

No sooner did the newly wedded pair emerge from the church than they were greeted with cheers, shouts and a salvo of guns. Their progress home took the form of a triumphal procession, all the folk vying with each other in their expressions of pleasure, their exclamations of goodwill, and the guns banged with such tremen-

dous reports of jubilation that it was a wonder they did not burst their sides.

Mikula invited his friends to a great feast of pig and cassava-flour puddings, washed down with copious draughts of water, tea and coffee. There was no wine, no drunkenness, and no debauchery; but a happy merry-making that left no bad "after palavers," and no unpleasant headaches.

About three or four months after the marriage the native Christians in Mikula's town and district were very busy in preparing their harvest thanksgiving offerings. Many of the women had hoed extra patches of peanuts and cassava gardens, the crops from which, when matured, they sold on the markets, and the proceeds were given to Mikula for the coming festival. Mats, baskets and saucepans were made and sold for the same purpose. The men also put by a certain portion of their "trade," and devoted the result to the same object. Others laid aside pieces of cloth, hats, umbrellas and various other articles to take with them as their gifts.

Mikula carefully noted all the moneys he received, and everybody concerned was looking forward with eager interest to the arrival of the letter that would inform them of the date of the coming religious fête.

At last the messenger arrived, the day was proclaimed, and those members of the Church and their friends (for everybody—Christian and non-Christian—was welcome to this festival) prepared their baskets of food, their offerings, their children and their clothes for the great event. As they travelled up to the station they met other contingents coming from various districts, near and far. They chatted about the news, compared their gifts, and the teachers and deacons consulted and talked over the progress of “God’s palaver” at the different centres of work.

Oh! wonder of wonders; the men helped the women in carrying the babies and the loads of food, etc. A kindly service they never rendered in the old days, for then the men swaggered along unencumbered, left their women to trudge after them as best they could with all the impedimenta on their backs, heads and in their arms—poor beasts of burden.

This Christian religion had certainly wrought a great change for the better in the condition of the women. Instead of being treated with contempt as inferiors, they were respected as equals; instead of receiving the leavings of the men, they now sat at the same table to eat with them; instead of being regarded as mere chattels to be borrowed and loaned, ill-treated, cursed and

killed, they were cherished as wives; and instead of being mere children-bearing, farm-making, food-cooking animals, they were now the companions of their husbands and the sharers of their sorrows and joys.

It was early on Saturday afternoon when we arrived on the station. There across the entrance to the ground was a red banner with these letters in white on it: "TUKAIYISI" (=Welcome); and that was not the only welcome our party received. The white men and their wives greeted us very heartily, and showed us houses, and loaned us mats for our use during our stay. The women quickly gathered about their lady teachers, and questions, kindly inquiries, and answers were the order of the day. My owner, Mikula, recognized, greeted and conversed with many of the young men who were lads at school with him in the old days.

What a happy reunion! How longingly anticipated, and how fully appreciated! Faces were missed there that were now present in the cool glades that border the River of Life; and some few were absent, because, through heinous sin, they had been cut off from the Church, and were ashamed to show themselves at this Christian festival of gladness and thanksgiving.

One white man had decorated the church with

palm-fronds, plantain-trees, festoons of creepers, flowers and flags. The station had been thoroughly swept, the flags streamed from the apex of the church to the ground. Another white man was looking after the comfort of the numerous visitors, allotting to them their sleeping-places, mats, and utensils for fetching water and cooking food. A third was receiving the numerous gifts, noting the names of the donors and districts, and arranging the offerings in front and around the platform.

What a miscellaneous assortment of gifts was there! Heaps of pumpkin seeds and peanuts; numerous bunches of plantains and bananas; a pile of oranges; pieces of cloth of various colours and qualities; umbrellas, eggs, glasses, fowls, rabbits, parcels of native tobacco, mats—plain and ornamented, kwanga loaves of native bread, pumpkins, calabashes, bundles of native greens, tomatoes, garden eggs, boxes of gun-caps, tins of gunpowder, and bottles of kerosene. Those who could not give garden produce or pieces of cloth presented mugs, plates, wash-hand basins, sauce-pans of native make, and European enamel-ware; those who had come too far to carry their offerings in kind, had sold them on the local markets and brought the results of such sales in francs and brass rods. Native tailors, who had made

A CHRISTIAN WEDDING.

Photo]

[Rev. J. H. Weeks

CHURCH COLLECTION AT WATHEN.

The Collection consists of:—Tin of gunpowder, calabash of gunpowder, bottle of kerosene, eggs, matches, gun caps, a plate, umbrella, mat, cloth, francs, brass rods—in all worth about £3.

jackets, dresses and cloths ready for wearing, presented them as their share.

Nothing came amiss, no gift was too small and no article too mean to find its place among those free-will expressions of a people's gratitude to God—for the poor gave to the point of self-sacrifice, and the comparatively rich gave in proportion to their wealth.

All through Saturday and Sunday every band of new arrivals gave in their offerings. Some had carried their heavy gifts—weighing from thirty to forty pounds—over hills, streams and swamps for three and four hours, and came up smilingly to unload themselves; and with shy, apologetic words they expressed themselves as sorry that the loads were not heavier, but that was all they had to bring.

Sunday with its various services passed all too quickly for those who had come such long distances to attend them. The early morning prayer-meeting was well supported. A native deacon conducted it, and very earnest were the prayers for a blessing on the missionary work that was so zealously maintained in all the districts, nor were other stations and missions forgotten before the throne of grace.

It was pathetic to hear their pleadings on behalf of relatives and friends still in the darkness

of heathenism; and surely the heart of God has been very deeply moved by such prayers, for not a year passes without scores of conversions and additions to the Church.

The afternoon service was crowded, and although the building seated over seven hundred every place was occupied and the doors and windows were filled with eager listeners as a slim man of medium height, who had laboured among them for nearly fifteen years, preached freely and fluently on their privileges and duties as Christian men and women. In the evening a deacon-preacher took the service, and very eloquently did he enforce the lessons given in the afternoon that as redeemed men and women, ransomed by the precious blood of Christ, heirs of God's eternal glory, it should be their gladsome duty to pass on the blessings they had received to those who were still ignorant of Christ's salvation.

I ought not to forget the morning service that was conducted by a white lady—the wife of one of the missionaries, a woman of large experience in the work, of wide sympathies, and, from what I could hear among the natives, a woman much beloved by them all for her unstinted labours.

“Why does a white woman take a service every Sunday?” I once heard asked by a native in

whose mental bank there were more sneers than kindly thoughts.

“Well,” replied a teacher who was sitting by, “the white men practise what they preach. They tell us to respect and reverence our wives, so they respect and reverence theirs; they teach us to treat our wives as equals, so they treat theirs as equals, hence they have arranged for a white woman to take one of the two principal services every Sunday. We have therefore always an example of what they inculcate that when God made woman He took a portion, not from the head of man to show that she should be over man, nor from the feet of man to show that she should be under man; but from the middle to teach that she should be equal to man—from near the heart to show that she should have his affection, and from under his arm to show she should have his protection. My white man told me that that was written by one of their famous teachers long ago. They would have that to be the keynote of our treatment of women as it is of theirs.”

Immediately after the service on Monday morning one of the white men mounted a table and began to sell the various gifts by auction to the highest bidders. The natives, both males and females, entered most heartily into the contest. The auctioneer knew the value of the

different articles and was careful to let nothing go under price.

The bids were in brass rods, and the rivalry for possession of the different articles was very keen. Jokes were cracked, repartees were exchanged, innocent pleasantries were indulged in, and amid much laughter one lot after another was knocked down to the successful bidders. It was a vivacious scene composed of both sexes of all ages, dressed in variegated colours, topped by smiling, black faces, and white, gleaming teeth.

The white men took it in turns to act as auctioneers, and at the close of the sale it was found that the total sum received for the local missionary work, *i. e.* for the support of native teachers, amounted to 82,095 brass rods (= £34 3s. 6d.). Everybody was pleased, and that night they sung most heartily, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." And thus ended the *matondo*, or harvest thanksgiving festival.

Soon after the final service the natives were bidding each other "good-bye," and on the road again, with their faces turned homeward. How safe the roads are compared with the bad, old days! Then natives went armed with guns and other weapons of defence, now they travel with nothing but their hymn-books and New Testaments for days without fear of molestation; woe

then to the individual who left his party, for he (or she) was pounced upon by thievish rascals, and was never heard of again; then men and women, boys and girls were captured on the slightest pretext, and even for penny and two-penny debts, and were sold to end their days in distant, cruel and unremitting toil as slaves; now boys and girls take long journeys in unmolested safety. The Gospel has taught the people that God cares for them, hence they are caring more for each other; that He loves them, and thus they are coming to love one another.

How selfish they used to be! How they grabbed at everything that came in their way, and held fast to every article they could put their fingers upon! How generously they now gave out of their comparative poverty, that the message of God that had transformed their lives, given them peace now, and hope for the great hereafter, might be proclaimed to others, that they also might share the same peace and possess the same buoyant, eternal hope. Then their *neighbours* were their own kith and kin only—members of their own families, and they did not hesitate to cheat, oppress, enslave or kill any one outside the family to benefit themselves; now they have discovered that their *neighbours* are the members of all families, clans and tribes under the sun,

and with all the energy of their renewed natures they are trying to put into daily practice the golden rule : Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you. Then they stole, lied, swindled and broke every law of man and God that they might die wealthy and have a grand funeral that should be the talk of the countryside ; now they walk many a weary mile, cross many a difficult stream, wade many a nasty swamp, to preach the news of God's great salvation, and give generously of their substance to support teachers. How marvellous are the workings of God's grace in the hearts of whilom savages !

Mikula, my owner, and his party arrived home all the stronger in their Christian faith for the service they had attended ; and more determined, by consecrated lives, by kindly actions, and by trying to live the life of Jesus Christ in word and daily deed, to win their heathen neighbours to the better life. At the station they had heard that there were more than fifteen hundred members belonging to their beloved Wathen Church. Fifteen hundred ! a large number indeed ! They would have sung the Hallelujah Chorus if they had known it. Yet how few fifteen hundred seemed among the thousands upon thousands in these large districts still outside the Church.

There was, however, a growing Christian sentiment, and a better-informed conscience manifesting themselves through the whole district, even among the heathen; and these are resulting in a keener perception of right and wrong. These are assets that should be placed to the credit of the Church, and promise well for its numerical and spiritual prosperity in the near future.

Had there been any laxity in receiving candidates into the Church the numbers could have easily been quadrupled; but the greatest care was exercised, and the strictest investigations made over every application for Church membership. It was quite possible to impose upon the white teachers, who could not possibly live in a hundred villages and towns at once; but the candidate could not deceive his Christian neighbours who are jealous of the honour of the Church, and who recognize that a pure Church of true men and women means a strong and an aggressive Church; whereas a membership of hypocrites would bring upon them the contemptuous scorn of their heathen neighbours, and would result in a weak, emasculated, stagnant Church worthy only of ridicule and extinction.

The natives live open lives in their villages, making their fires in the streets, cooking their food and eating it in the open, talking, working

and living such unsecluded lives that in a village everybody knows everything about everybody else and a little more besides—there is no hiding any fact of life from one another, hence when the name of a candidate for Church fellowship is submitted there are sure to be present some who know the life the candidate is living in his or her town.

One evening, when my owner, Mikula, and his wife were sitting at their fire, a stranger from a distant village greeted them, and told the deacon that he had come to converse with him about "God's palaver." Continuing, he said: "I have heard the evangelists preach in the different villages I have been visiting, about the Saviour Jesus Christ; and I have listened to the white men more than once, and my heart is standing up with fear, because I have sinned greatly against God and broken all His commandments. When I think of my many sins and that God will surely punish me for them, I cannot sleep at night. Tell me more about Jesus, the Saviour." And a look of intense longing came into the eyes of the inquirer.

Mikula unfolded to him clearly and fully God's way of salvation. He read passage after passage from the New Testament to enforce every statement he made; and Mikula's wife aided him by

holding a candle in one hand and shading it with the other that the light might fall on the sacred page, and occasionally she recalled to her husband's mind such scriptures as would help their visitor.

Long into the night they sat conversing, fire after fire along the street died down, and they had heard the good-night greetings of "sleep well" as their neighbours retired to rest; but they had again and again replenished their own fire, and had continued their earnest talk on the greatest of all themes—the way of salvation to a sin-stricken soul. At last their visitor said: "I see it—Christ died for me, the just for the unjust, the good one for the bad one, the Son of God in place of me—the sinner." And there around the fire the three bowed their heads while Mikula lifted up his heart in prayer and praise.

The next evening the visitor again took his seat at Mikula's fire, and after the usual greetings had been exchanged, said: "I want to join with you Christians and become a member of the Church. Can I join at once?"

"No," replied Mikula, "you cannot. You must go back to your village, and live a Christian life there for many months, and prove by your words and actions that you are truly sorry for your former bad life, and are now a follower of

Jesus Christ. You must be a total abstainer, and by this you will avoid the many temptations to drunkenness. If you like you can now enroll yourself as a member of the Blue Cross Temperance Society."

"Very well, I will do so now," assented the visitor. "It will be hard to give up palm-wine, gin and other drinks, especially at funerals, marriages and on the markets."

"Yes, I know it will," replied Mikula, as he went for the pledge book; "but there are more than two thousand members of this Temperance Society, and God will help you to live a sober life." The visitor put his mark against his name in the pledge book, and I heard that his name was Tutula.

"The next thing that you must renounce is dancing," continued my owner. "You know our dances lead to adultery, and from that to rows, fights and murder. Therefore it is a rule of the Church that its members should not take part in any of the country dances.

"Then again, you must not call in witch-doctors, nor may you employ them for any purpose whatever. Witchcraft and Christianity cannot mix together any more than you can mix palm-oil and water. And you must throw away or destroy all your fetishes and charms—a Christian

man should trust in God, and not in the paltry, stupid messes prepared by witch-doctors."

"Yes," said Tutula, "I can understand that the temptations to a man or woman engaging in our country dances is very great; and to practise witchcraft and use fetishes and charms would dishonour God. When I return home I will destroy my fetishes." And as he spoke he took from his neck and wrists some charms and handed them over to his new friend and teacher, who dropped them into the fire that was blazing between them.

"How many wives have you?" asked Mikula.

"I have seven," replied Tutula, "two of them are old, three of them are young women, and two of them mere girls."

"Perhaps you have heard," said Mikula, "that the members of the Church have given up the practice of marrying many wives, and those who are married have been wedded to one wife only by holy matrimony. This is the law of God." And he opened his New Testament and read the various places where this law is clearly stated.

"Yes, I know that is the practice of your Christians," replied Tutula, "and it will cost me a great amount of money to follow it, for, being a man of importance in my district, I have

had the pick of the females, and have given large sums in 'marriage money' for the women I have borrowed.¹ Cannot I retain three or four of them?"

"No," answered Mikula, "we deacons and Church members have studied this point very carefully, and the words of Christ are very strong and definite on the subject. Is it not better to go to heaven having only one wife, than to be cast into hell with many women?"

"There is one other matter," continued Mikula, "and I have done: As a Christian man who has received pardon for your many sins and a hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ, you should pass these blessings on to others by giving freely according to your means, and regularly, for the support of native teachers to proclaim the love of God in Christ Jesus. I am a teacher, but I do my work as such without any pay, because I am living in my own town; but there are teachers who are working in towns and among peoples not their own, and they must be supported, and what they receive is very little."

"I thank God in Jesus Christ for all that He has done for me!" fervently exclaimed Tutula. "And listen! if you will find a good teacher I will give him a house to live in, and pay half the

¹ See note 54, p. 358.

cost of his support, for I want the people in my village and neighbourhood to know of God's love and pardon."

In due time a teacher was selected and sent to Tutula's villages, and he taught Tutula, among others, to read God's word for himself. Some months afterwards I was present with Mikula when Tutula and many of his neighbours were baptized and received into the Church; counting wine, women, witchcraft palavers, and native dances as mere dross that they might win Christ and be found in union with Him.

Chapter XXV

Mikula at the Christmas Festival

Months glide quickly by while working hard—Deacon's meeting—Church-meeting—The kind of candidates who were rejected—Baptismal service—The great meeting of the Church—Election of deacons—The balance sheet—A deficit—Native Christians wipe out the debt—Local missionary meeting—The great communion service.

HOW quickly the months glided by! Mikula, my owner, was a busy man of affairs. As deacon and teacher he voluntarily gave many days every month to his arduous duties—visiting lukewarm members and absentees from communion, investigating charges brought against such as were accused of breaking the Church's rules, examining and instructing candidates for Church fellowship, receiving the contributions from Church members, paying the teachers of his district their monthly allowances, performing the rites of burial and of marriage, preaching in his own town and frequently visiting other towns and villages to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Besides all these labours for the Church, he

helped his wife by doing the roughest work on the farm, visited many of the markets for purposes of trade, for this was his principal means of subsistence—the means by which he met his various obligations as a man, a husband, and a Church member.

If he had devoted the whole of his time to trading he would have been a rich man. He was 'cute, smart, and energetic enough; but he preferred laying up treasure in heaven where neither white ants, nor rats, nor mildew could depreciate the value of his wealth.

It was thus the months passed all too quickly, and brought us to the great Church Festival held at Christmas-time, and the three principal events of this gathering were the Church-meetings, the baptisms, and the communion service.

Messengers and letters had been sent to all the deacons and teachers spread over the three thousand square miles that comprised the parish of the Wathen missionaries. These letters had informed the officials and Church members of the date upon which they were to assemble, and urging them to come in large numbers.

During all the afternoon and evening of the appointed Saturday, groups of men and women were continually arriving on the station, and the housing accommodation was taxed to its utmost

capacity. The programme for the meeting had been arranged about a month before, and every male and female missionary had had their parts apportioned to them; but unhappily just on the very eve of the meetings two of the white men went down with very serious fevers, and the depleted little band of white folk had to work the harder to make up for those unfortunately laid aside.

At four o'clock on the Saturday afternoon the deacons were assembled, and the business to be laid before the coming Church meeting was thoroughly examined, such as cases of discipline, fitness of applicants for Church membership, the work, pay, and appointments of teachers to new spheres, or their removal from one place to another, and the many other points that demanded attention and investigation.

Soon after seven o'clock the bell rang out calling all those concerned to the Church meeting. About five hundred male and female members gathered. A hymn was sung, a prayer offered, a portion of Scripture was read, the minutes of the previous month were read and confirmed, and then the business of the meeting began—of course, everything was conducted in the vernacular, consequently everybody present could enter fully into the matters laid before

them. After various items of business had been voted upon, the claims of candidates for Church membership were scrutinized and voted upon by those present.

While they were considering Mr. A.'s desire to join the Church, a member arose and stated that the applicant had a very bad temper, became enraged at the smallest annoyance, and frequently for no reason at all; and the speaker thought that the candidate should by properly and continually controlling his irritable nature get a better temper before he was received into the Church. The other members thought the same, and voted that Mr. A. should wait for a few months and be informed of the reason.

A little later the case of Mr. B. was under consideration, when a native of his village arose and said that the candidate was a very lazy man, lounging about the village all day, living on his wife; and he thought that such a person was undesirable as a Church member. Let him do some work and be honestly industrious for a year and then apply again. The vote was taken, and Mr. B. was counted as unworthy of Church membership until he had changed his lazy habits.

Later still in the evening the name of Mr. D. was mentioned as desirous of joining the Church,

when a neighbour of his jumped to his feet saying: "Mr. D. is in debt to many people in his village and to others in the surrounding villages. Now we think that a member of this Church should not be in debt to any one; let him pay all his debts first and then apply for membership." Hence Mr. D. was informed afterwards that he must go and pay his debts and apply later.

Others were rejected through lack of knowledge of the fundamentals of the Christian religion; others for using fetishes and charms, thus showing they were not altogether free of their heathen superstitions; and others because their lives were not consistent with their Christian profession. But after all this winnowing there were more than twenty who were recognized as worthy of joining the Church.

The following day, Sunday, commenced with an early morning prayer and praise meeting; then at the nine o'clock service the missionary preached a suitable sermon to the accepted candidates on some of the passages in Revelation, where the word "overcome" occurs; and at the close the candidates for baptism arose one by one, and in simple language, and, often with much nervousness, bore his or her testimony to the pardoning love of God in Christ Jesus that had called them out of the great darkness into His marvellous

light. And then we adjourned to the place where the baptismal rite was to be administered.

The place was about a mile from the station, and the baptistery was formed by the natural widening of the stream into a pool that answered the purpose as though it had been designed especially. The stream came from an open valley, and, filling the pool, passed beneath the cool shelter of some trees that threw a shade over a part of the shore, that by a steepish slope led down to the water. This incline was covered with people in their varied coloured dresses and cloths, tier above tier, that were desirous of witnessing the baptisms. Many lads and young men had waded across the water, and had seated themselves on the edge of the farther bank, from which point of advantage they gained an uninterrupted view of all that took place. Around the nearer side of the pool, occupying positions right on the very edge of the water, were those who were to undergo the rite of baptism—the observed of all observers, nervously conscious of all eyes being fixed upon them.

A baptismal hymn was very heartily sung, two deacons offered prayer, and then one by one, the women first, and then the men, the candidates entered the pool and were baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—buried with

Him in the waters, a symbol that the old, heathen life was finished, and raised again—a sign that henceforth they were to lead new lives of faith, purity and love in Jesus Christ.

Soon after ten o'clock on Monday morning the bell sounded forth its clamorous call to the great Church meeting. The large building was soon filled with more than six hundred Church members—male and female, who had gathered to elect their deacons for the ensuing year, to hear of the progress of Christ's kingdom in their large parish, and to have laid before them a financial statement concerning the income and expenditure of the closing year.

All deacons, no matter in what month they were elected, relinquished office automatically at the end of the year, therefore one member of the Church proposed, and another seconded a resolution of thanks to the deacons for their work during the past year. This was carried unanimously with much clapping of hands—a purely native mode of expressing thanks whether performed by an individual or a crowd. Then two others proposed and seconded a request that the retiring deacons be asked to take office again for the coming year, with two exceptions. One deacon during the year had broken a rule of the Church, and as it was essential for the welfare of

A NATIVE MARKET.

Photo]

[J. R. M. Stephens.

BAPTISMAL SERVICE, CHRISTMAS, 1905.

the Church that their deacons should be blameless in life and character, he was not re-elected. Another deacon had exhibited much incapacity and such an utter lack of zeal in the discharge of his important duties, that he was asked to stand on one side to make room for a better man. The rest were re-elected with acclamation. Their spokesman replied in a few suitable words, and begged them to remember their deacons always in prayer that they might perform their difficult duties worthily of the Master they all desired to serve.

It was felt in consequence of the work extending so rapidly that the number of deacons should be increased to twenty-five to adequately cope with the work. Men, therefore, of strong character, of long, faithful service, and good Christian lives were chosen and voted to the office to make up the desired number.

Then the missionary who had charge of the Church books wrote on a black-board the number of members in fellowship at the beginning of the year, the number of those who had been expelled for inconsistency, the number who had passed to the eternal home during the twelve months, the large number that had been baptized on profession of their faith in Christ, and it was shown that those who were enjoying all the privileges

of Church membership made a grand total of 1674. Here and there over the building could be heard ejaculations of "Tutondele Mfumu Nzambi!" ("We thank Thee, Lord God!")

The white man then put another black-board in position, and wrote on it all the offerings from the various districts, the amount of the July Harvest Thanksgiving, and sundry other items to the credit of the Church accounts—it reached some hundreds of thousands of brass rods. On another black-board he wrote down the cost of the teachers in the different districts, and when these were added up there was a large deficit. What were they to do—leave the Church in debt, or withdraw some of the teachers? No, they must wipe that debt off!

Another black-board was quickly in position to receive their offerings for clearing away the deficit. A white teacher present said: "I will give two thousand rods towards the debt." But a native deacon arose to his feet and said: "White man, we thank you for your kind offer to help us; but this is our work for Jesus Christ, and we intend to do it by paying that debt ourselves. Christ has done so much for us, that we must do this little bit of work for Him."

During the next hour the missionaries were very busy writing down gifts and promises; and

gradually the debt shrank until at last it disappeared. They had contributed over £180 to meet the entire expenses of their local missionary work. It was a large sum for poor people; but it was an expression of their gratitude to God for all the benefits they had received through the preaching of the Gospel. If it had been possible to value all the voluntary work done by deacons and Church members, the above amount would have been more than doubled.

That night a missionary meeting was held. The building was full; bright and inspiring hymns were sung; and one teacher after another told of the difficulties and triumphs of the Gospel in his part of the district. Then two of the white men spoke of the grand results that had attended the efforts of other missionaries at the various stations on the Upper and Lower Congo. They summed up by saying : that thirty years ago there was not a single language that had been reduced to writing, now eight had been mastered, and into them more or less of God's Word had been translated; thirty years ago and there was not a single person on the Congo who knew how to read or write, now there were thousands of men and women, boys and girls who were reading God's Word in their own languages; thirty years ago there was not a single native teacher on the

Congo, now there were nearly five hundred—two-thirds of whom were entirely supported by the free-will offerings of the native Christians, and the other third doing voluntary work in their own towns and villages; thirty years ago not a solitary brass rod was given to God's work—but hundreds of thousands of them were spent on witch-doctors, fetishes and charms, now over £400 a year are given by native Christians that others might hear the glad news of Christ's redemption; thirty years ago there was not a single Christian throughout the whole length and breadth of Congoland, now in fellowship with the B. M. S. Churches alone there are nearly 3500 Church members, and God Himself alone knows the great number that has already passed from the Church militant on earth, through faith in Christ, to the Church triumphant in heaven that is gathering around the great white throne of the Lamb. These are 3500 fulfilments of God's promises; 3500 encouragements to continue the work with zeal and aggressiveness; 3500 proofs of the power of the Gospel to change the hearts, and purify the lives of men and women.

It was about eleven o'clock next morning when that bell called the Christians and their friends to the last great meeting of the festival. The

building in which the service was held was long, wide and rather squatty, with no claim to beauty or dignity, and no pretensions to architectural elegance; and although in the eyes of men it might honestly be styled ugly, yet in the eyes of angels it must be very beautiful—for it is the birthplace of many a soul.

It was all too small that day to hold the crowd that pressed into it. The seats soon filled, and the mats that had been spread on every available space quickly received more than their full quota of people, and the doors and windows rapidly filled with folk who listened as eagerly as those who were inside the building. How heartily they all entered into the simple service!

The preacher knew their difficulties, their temptations and their weaknesses; he knew the pit of heathenism from which they had been digged; and he knew that they were going back to their towns, villages and homes to live among superstitious heathen neighbours, so he preached to them with the power born of full and deep conviction from 2 Tim. i. 12; and they by and by returned home strengthened to continue the fight knowing that God was with them, and, therefore, they were on the winning side.

The preaching service over, the non-members

left the building, and their places were immediately filled with those Church members who had been standing round the doors and windows. Over seven hundred persons were present to take the communion.

The eyes of the white man who officiated dimmed with tears as he looked over that crowded assembly of communicants. He thought of those who had borne the heat and burden of the day, those who had toiled and died without knowing of any results to their labour; he thought of those who, baffled and defeated by broken health, had been compelled to retire from the dangerous climate; he thought of those native teachers who had lived faithfully and worked arduously to bring about this grand gathering; and he thought also of that vast number of friends in the homeland who by their labours, gifts and prayers had made this glorious assembly possible. Surely all would ultimately rejoice together in the great, glad cry of Harvest Home! Perhaps—who can tell?—the spirits of those who have passed away, missionaries and supporters—white and black workers alike, were, some of them, present at that service and were rejoicing together over so numerous a company of ransomed souls.

It was in a tremulous voice that the white man addressed a few words to those who were to be

received in that day, and then he took each by the hand and welcomed him and her into fellowship in the name of the Church. After that a prayer was offered that these new brethren and sisters might ever remain true witnesses for Christ, the Saviour.

A hymn was then sung that the hearts and thoughts of all present might be centred on the purpose of their presence in the gathering—to commemorate the death of their dear Lord until He come.

One of the deacons prayed for a blessing on the "bread," and it was then dispensed among the communicants, and after they had partaken of it they bowed their heads in reverent worship. The cups were then distributed to every member in that great assembly. Another deacon pleaded with God for a blessing on the cup; and then the missionary arose, and holding his cup in his hand, said: "This cup is the New Testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death until He come."

And as soon as his tones had died away seven hundred cups were raised and drained to the memory of their Saviour, and seven hundred

hearts bowed in prayer before the Lord. In a little time there arose upon the air a song of faith. It was a translation of that incomparable hymn—

“There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins ;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

“Dear dying Lamb ! Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved to sin no more.

“Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I’ll sing Thy power to save,
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue,
Lies silent in the grave.”

NOTES TO PART I

1. *Being only eleven inches long* (page 1).—Over a very large part of the Congo soft brass wire of 34 gauge is now, and has been for many years, the currency and the standard of value among the natives. This wire was probably, in the first instance, introduced and used for ornamental purposes, as binding round spears and knives, or beaten out into ribbons of brass for decorating the hafts of their best spears and paddles. At first the wire was bought in long lengths of so many fathoms, according to the needs of the buyer and the purchasing power of the article he offered the trader in exchange for it. Later they found it more easy of manipulation to have it in lengths of thirty inches, and these were shortened by those who had large numbers of them cutting off a half-inch from each one and melting the small pieces down for brass anklets, necklets, and bracelets, thus procuring their brass for nothing, *i. e.* cutting off short pieces from each rod and passing the rods again into currency at their normal value. So much of this was done that the thirty-inch rod was reduced to twenty-seven inches, and sellers of goods consequently demanded more rods of the shorter ones than of the longer lengths.

This process of snipping off little pieces has gone on for thirty years, and the result is that the brass rod has gradually decreased in length until now, on the Lower Congo, it is scarcely five inches, and among the Boloki of the Monsembe district it is only eleven inches, and if the introduction of money does not displace the rod it will become only four or five inches in that part also.

Of course, as the rod lessens in length the seller of an article demands more of them for his goods. Thus an article that once cost three rods of thirty-inch wire now costs thirty of the five-inch rods; for not only has the rod shortened in length, but through the introduction of so much brass wire into the country during the last quarter of a century it has decreased in value. I hope some day to take the Rod among those people who use an eleven-inch brass rod as their money.

2. *Kroo boys* (p. 3).—These were natives procured from the Kroo Coast to work the cargo on the steamers that ran along the west coast of Africa. Only sufficient white sailors were carried to work the ship from starting port to the Kroo country. On arrival there, the ship fired a gun to intimate its need of a gang of Kroo "boys" to handle the cargo. These "boys" were any age from about eighteen to fifty, and in a gang there were generally about forty to fifty "boys" under a head man.

Most captains had a head man who gathered a gang ready by the time his ship returned from its European port. For example: a ship leaves Liverpool, and on arriving at the coast picks up its head man and gang of "boys," who work the winches, man the boats and handle the cargo all the way along the coast and back again to their own country, where they are paid off in barter goods, powder, guns, rum and gin at the rate of one shilling a day. They then rest after their arduous work until that ship returns, and they engage themselves for another trip. The Congo boats now pick up their Kroo "boys" at Sierra Leone on the outward voyage, and drop them there on the homeward journey, and pay them in cash at the rate of about one shilling to one and sixpence per day and their rations.

When not in port these Kroo "boys" polished the brasswork, scraped the iron, cleaned the paint, holystoned the deck, etc.; but when in port they went into the holds, tied up the cargo in slings, hoisted it by winches, put it over the side into boats, and rowed it ashore. They were hard-working men who toiled from 4 a.m. until 10 or 12 p.m., only resting for their meals of boiled rice, salt beef or fish, and ship's biscuits.

3. *Peasoup* (p. 4).—When the writer went to Congo first in 1881 there came on board at the Kroo coast a head man whose name was Peasoup. For many years he had acted as head man for the captain of that ship, who, as an acknowledgment of his various good qualities, and as a joke, presented him with a brass plate to hang round his neck by means of a chain. The following words were engraved on it—

PEASOUP

Captain Jolly's Head Man.

A Rogue, Thief, and a Liar.

Peasoup was a tall, thin, grey-headed, bandy-legged man; and I used to see him polish the plate every morning, hang it across his chest, and with knock-knees and bandy legs strut the deck and order his men about as proud as any general with a breast hidden by medals.

Peasoup knew English fairly well, but, of course, could not read it; but he would never accept as true the accurate rendering of his much-prized brass plate. Passengers read it correctly to him; but with a laugh he would retort: "You white men, you no sabbe read them thing properly. Him live for say: 'Peasoup, Captain Jolly's Head Man. Him be plenty, proper, good man.'"

Since those days Peasoup has passed away, leaving his brass plate as an heirloom to his family, and if not melted down into a brass ornament, it may turn up some day as a relic of a joke played by a master on a decent servant in "the good old days" on the West African Coast.

4. *Riddles and conundrums* (p. 9) were called *ngwala*; *ta e ngwala* = to pour out or ask a riddle; *twasa e ngwala* = to fetch a riddle here, *i. e.* give us a riddle; *nua e ngwala* = give us the answer, or, lit., to drink the riddle.

Ngwala also means spirits, rum, gin, from a corruption and a shortening of the Portuguese word *aguardente* = *gwaladente* = *ngwala*. The "r" is always turned into "l," and the "g" takes the nasal "n" before it. It is very probable that they pun on the double meaning of the word *ngwala* = riddle, and gin. Hence the usual form of asking a conundrum is—

Ngwala yeye = here is gin, *i. e.* here is a riddle.

Ta e ngwala = pour out the gin, *i. e.* state the riddle (or *twasa e ngwala* = bring the gin here).

If those asked cannot give the answer, they say—

Nua e ngwala = drink the gin, *i. e.* give us the answer yourself, as we cannot guess it.

The natives of the Lower Congo are very fond of this pastime, but one needs to understand the customs, language, and surroundings to properly appreciate the conundrums; consequently only a few almost self-evident ones, or those easily explained, are put in the text.

5. *It was a fetish* (p. 12).—The early traders on the Congo placed in their large stores a fetish to deter the natives from

robbing them. It was generally a large, gaudily-coloured, hideous image put on the top shelf opposite the door, from which position it was supposed to dominate and guard the contents of the whole building. Many traders called their store "the fetish" because of the presence of this ugly figure in it.

This fetish exercised little, if any, deterrent power over the natives for two reasons: (1) No witch-doctor would waste good "medicine," procured with difficulty, on making a fetish powerful for a mere white man, and the natives knew this; and (2) supposing the witch-doctor put proper "medicine" into the fetish, yet it needed periodic reinvigorating at the hands of the witch-doctor, otherwise it became weak and useless; and it would also require a sacrifice, certainly not less frequently than once a month, of either a large fowl or a goat, or it would become sulky and not act on behalf of its owner. Now I never heard of a white man renewing the energy of his fetish by paying a witch-doctor to palaver over it at stated intervals, nor did I ever hear of a white man offering a sacrifice to the fetish in his store; therefore while the trader was relying on his fetish to guard his goods, his native servants and workpeople were laughing at it as an ineffective carved figure.

6. *In the sea there is a hole* (p. 17).—Water sprites are supposed to make the trade cloth, and as it is so finely woven the natives think that these particular sprites have only *one eye*, i. e. that the visual power of two eyes is focussed in one that it may see to do such fine work.

7. *Some of his companions laughed* (p. 20).—We are apt to think that all natives are equally superstitious, but that is not so. A man may be a devout believer in charms and fetishes, he may decorate his person, his house, his children, his pigs, his goats and his dogs with as many charms as he can afford to buy, or he may quietly leave all the charms and fetishes severely alone, and no one will think the better or worse of him; but he must believe in witchcraft, in witches and their occult power, or his life will be made wretched with accusations of witchcraft. I have known some natives to surround themselves with fetishes and charms, and most scrupulously observe all rites and ceremonies, and I have known others to disregard the whole box of tricks and hold them in contempt.

8. *Burial postponed* (p. 24).—It is not uncommon to postpone the funeral of an important person for many months, and even years. The writer once buried a man who had been dead for nearly fifteen years. The persons responsible put off the expense as long as possible, and it is probable they would not then have interred the corpse, but the King ordered the family "to finish the palaver." There was another case of a body being left unburied for over twenty years because the man who was responsible for the cost of the funeral believed that he would "die the day after he buried the corpse." Many thought that this was only an excuse to avoid the expense. The body was dried, wound in cloth, stored in a house specially built for the purpose, and guarded by relays of young women.

9. *Nkandu* (p. 25).—See Chapter XVIII on Governing, Marketing, and Trading (p. 223).

10. *Cassava flour* (p. 26).—Mandioc (or cassava) was introduced into Congo from South America about the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century. Its native name is *madioka*, an evident attempt at saying mandioc. The roots when matured were soaked for a few days in pools, or streams, by which time they were soft. They were then peeled, cut in halves or quarters, and put on stones and small platforms in the sun until the pieces were quite dry. After this the pieces were laid out on shelves over their fires until friable, and they were then easily pounded in a mortar, sifted through a fine sieve, and the result was a very fine, white flour. Raw mandioc contains prussic acid, but the poison is eliminated by heat.

11. *Kwanga* (p. 26).—The cassava root was soaked, peeled, and cored, as under note 10. Then, instead of being dried, it was thoroughly kneaded and all lumps removed. The dough-like substance was made into long sausages of various lengths and thicknesses, according to the districts, or into balls like suet puddings. I have seen the sausages in one district twenty feet long and two inches thick, and in another twelve inches long and four inches thick. But whatever the shape, the dough was wrapped in palm-leaves, or in leaves like the *aspidistra*, and steamed until well cooked. These *kwanga* would then keep sweet for several days. They were sold on the markets,

and an average price would be at the rate of four shillings for two cwt.; and four pounds were quite sufficient for a man per day.

12. *Bolt his food* (p. 29).—It was not the custom at ordinary meals for the natives to eat greedily, but on occasions such as this, when all sorts of folk were thrown together, each one ate as much as he could get. See paragraph on greediness in the Introduction to the "Folk-Lore Stories."

13. *Luku* (p. 38).—The cassava flour is made as under note 10, and the *luku* is prepared in the following way: A saucepan of water is set on the fire, and when the water boils, the cook takes a basket of the flour and sprinkles it with one hand in the boiling water and stirs it with a stick held in the right hand. This process is continued until the porridge is stiff and can be turned out as one whole pudding from the saucepan. When a person is eating it, he breaks off a piece, rolls it in his fingers, dips it in some gravy and then lets it roll down his throat without masticating, otherwise it will stick to the teeth like toffee.

14. *Glass vessel* (p. 44).—In the original it is *ekumbi dia pelo* = ship of glass; *pelo* is from the Portuguese *espelho* = mirror, glass, etc. Probably glass was first seen by the natives in the form of looking-glasses, and *ekumbi dia pelo* might be translated—the mirror or looking-glass ship.

The introduction of glass, guns, etc., into their stories are indicative of native readiness to expand their tales by the free assimilation of new ideas received from contact with foreigners. This has also had a wide influence on their language and fetish religion. This story I first heard in 1882 at San Salvador.

15. *Laid beads* (p. 45).—In San Salvador and district beads form the currency. They are round blue beads three-eighths of an inch in length and about a quarter of an inch thick. One hundred of these beads threaded on a cotton cost, invoice price, one farthing, and one egg cost one string of beads. It was possible to buy little lots of food for ten and fifteen beads. The phrase "laid beads" is equal to "laid money." In an Upper River story the fowl "laid brass rods," *i. e.* the currency, money.

16. *Ndungu* (p. 52) is equivalent to our phrase "you are becoming cold," and the more indifferently it was uttered by the crowd, the more certain was the witch-doctor that he had guessed wide of the mark. See next note.

17. *Otuama* (p. 52) is our way of saying "you are becoming hot," and by this the witch-doctor knew he was getting very near in his guesses, and the more excitedly it was shouted, the nearer the guesser knew he was to the facts of the case. In Chapter XXII the whole trick is more fully explained. See also preceding note.

18. *Ran for his gun* (p. 53).—I was talking in 1908 to a former witch-doctor, who told me that he had been threatened three times with guns by those whom he had accused of witchcraft, and if he had not precipitately fled he would have been shot. Hence those *ngangas* who engaged in witch-finding always made sure of their fees first, and sent them away by their assistants, hurrying off themselves directly they had accused their man. It was dangerous work.

19. *Mboma* (pp. 59, 78).—In San Salvador and its neighbourhood this word meant the south bank of the Congo River from Ennoki to Matadi, or such trading-stations as existed on that part of the river. This *mboma* was from eighty to ninety miles from San Salvador, and took a caravan about five days to traverse it. Special letter carriers would cover the distance in three days. This word we generally translated "coast."

20. *Congo dia Ngungu*, or, in its fuller native form, *Ekongo dia Ngunga* (p. 60).—Scattered over the country are several Congos (or Kongos), as *Kongo dia Mpalabala*, *Kongo dia Lembwa*, etc. To distinguish San Salvador from the other towns bearing the name of Kongo it was known by the natives either as *Kongo dia Ntotela* = Kongo of the King, or *Kongo dia Ngunga* = Kongo of the Bell. The former designation referred to the town as the capital of the country and the residence of the King. The latter name is probably due to the fact that the Portuguese Roman Catholics in the sixteenth century built a cathedral and monastery there, and used a large bell to call the people to the services. Such a bell would be a wonder to the natives, and quite sufficient to cause them to name the town the Kongo of the Bell.

21. *Smell of white man* (p. 61).—However contemptuously we may talk about the “smell of niggers” or “of Chinese” and others, there is no doubt that we of the white race emit an odour that is very noticeable to other races. Repeated bathing and frequent changes of clothes will not eradicate the odour, for a black man can tell when another black man has been within a yard of any white man for a short time. Account for it how you will, the black, red, yellow and white races each emits an effluvium peculiarly its own and offensive to the others—we must, therefore, bear and forbear. We as a white race are used to our own scent and do not notice it, and when one lives a long time amongst black people he becomes accustomed to their odour.

Occasionally I have been with a white man who, in spite of scrupulous cleanliness, was very malodorous through suffering from empyreuma; and I have met here and there a native whose smell was especially offensive, and it was as objectionable to his black neighbours as to us. The natives have a definite word for such malodorous emanations. Some lads have told me that the perspiration of some white men has made them vomit.

22. *You white man* (p. 63).—A native has just as much objection to being called “a white man” as a white man has to being called “a nigger.” In both languages it is an insult to be resented.

23. *Screaming* (p. 64).—In the pioneer years of the mission, when white folk were seldom seen and were always regarded with superstitious fear, I was frequently startled out of my sleep by women screaming out: “The white man has stolen my child!” And I have wondered on more than one occasion whether the half-sleepy folk would in a stupid panic turn me out of their town in the middle of the night or do even worse.

24. *Mboma*.—See note 19.

25. *Fines paid for judging* (p. 92).—All fines received by a native judge are periodically divided among the chiefs of the district, who combine to enforce the law. If a pig or a goat is given, then the meat is shared out or the market value put into the fund. The money or goods are divided according to the rank and influence of the chiefs, and he who might be called the

chairman, or principal, received twice as much as any of the others.

26. *No shelves* (p. 95).—Many years ago, after much persuasion, I induced some natives from the Zombo country to come into my house at San Salvador. The first thing they did was to scan with much eagerness the walls of my rooms, and on asking them what they were looking for, they replied, "We have always heard and believed that you white men bought up the dead bodies of the black people, stored them on shelves in your houses, and on the first good opportunity sent them to Mputu (Europe), where by your wonderful magic you returned the life of the corpses, and they then worked for you as slaves; but we cannot see the shelves."

"But why did you think we bought corpses?" I asked, with much wonder and amazement.

"We can understand why traders come to this country," they answered, "but we cannot understand why your kind of white men come, for you do not trade, so we think you have some wicked purpose underlying your presence in our land."

Believing such ghastly things about us, their opposition to us and hatred of us were no longer a surprise to me. The wonder is that they did not murder all of us. We have had to live down their prejudices, remove their foolish beliefs about us, and turn their suspicions into confidence and love.

27. *Trade gin* (p. 99).—Whatever ordinary gin may be, "trade gin" was the vilest concoction of fusel oil and other ingredients that was ever put on the market for human consumption. It always made the drinkers mad drunk, and was responsible for most of the quarrels and much of the fighting that took place among the natives. I have known a white man take to drinking it and be dead in less than a week, and undoubtedly it was the cause of many deaths among the natives. A dozen reputed pints in bottles, case, packing, etc., cost only half-a-crown the lot.

28. *Law against the sale of spirits* (p. 102).—Since the time mentioned in the text a law has been passed limiting the sale of these "fire waters" within certain boundaries, and restricting the sale of them, so that neither white nor black can procure them without special "permits."

29. *Make them sell it* (p. 102).—Several traders have told me how much they hated selling such vile stuff to the natives; how they had protested against the sale; but that they were compelled to sell them as they yielded such large profits to their employers. Surely the curse of both God and man must ever rest on such gains!

30. *His santu* (p. 111).—All the men and women in and around San Salvador, and a large proportion of those living in the other districts of the Lower Congo, have each a *santu*, from the Portuguese word *sancto* = a christian, or sacred, name.

At birth a native name is given to the boy (or girl), and later in life—at twelve or fourteen—the lad can take another name of his own choice if, for any reason, he is dissatisfied with his birth name, and allow his first one to be forgotten by disuse. While in their teens they also select a *santu* which is a Congoized form of a Portuguese name, as Manwele = Manuel = Emanuel; Nzau = Jaõa = John; Petelo = Pedro = Peter, etc.; and the women take Madia = Maria = Mary, etc. To their *santus* they prefix “Dom” and “Donna” respectively.

In San Salvador and the near towns every man and woman has a *santu*, but the farther you travel from San Salvador, the less frequently is the *santu* found among the people. Undoubtedly it is a survival of the *sancto* given by the Roman Catholics to those who were baptized into their Church.

Although the possession of “Dom” and “Donna” was so common, yet the use of them was somewhat restricted to the better class of natives, much the same as our use of Mr. and Mrs. and Miss. Of some men the natives never spoke without calling them “Dom,” and to others they never prefixed the “Dom” except when they wanted to ingratiate themselves or ask a special favour.

31. *To represent dolls* (p. 114).—The girls would often procure pieces of firewood or cassava roots to represent dolls, and play with them as such, carrying them tied to their backs, or on their hips, by old rags, just as their mothers carried them when babies. These dolls they washed in old saucepans, and held them out for a few minutes in the sun to dry, as they themselves had been washed and dried. Then they dressed them in strings of beads and a few imitation charms and re-tied them on their backs.

When I first saw this performance—nearly thirty years ago—I felt great pity for the wee girls having such poor dolls, and sent home to buy a few for them. In due time they arrived, and the first girl I met carrying a cassava root (in shape like a parsnip) I offered her one of my dolls. She looked at it in great consternation—it was something uncanny to her. It had legs, arms, body, head and a face just like a human being. It was only with much persuasion that I prevailed on her to exchange her root for my doll. A few days afterwards I heard that my doll was sold on the market at a good price as a white man's powerful fetish. The other dolls remained in the box, although there were many requests for them. We had not gone there to supply fetishes.

32. *Size of the King of San Salvador* (p. 138).—On August 3, 1882, I wrote as follows to a friend in England: "I have done a very foolish thing to-day, for I have promised his majesty that I will ask you to make him three shirts. I have not given him a personal present yet, and thought some shirts would be suitable. I want you to buy three different patterns of good, strong, showy stuff, with plenty of colour. The shirts must have cuffs, collars and fronts.

"The measurements are as follows—

"Across the shoulders, 2 feet 11 inches.

"Waist, 5 feet 8 inches in circumference.

"Armholes, 23 inches in circumference.

"Round the neck, 20 inches.

"Arm, 1 foot 3 inches, not including the cuff, which is 5 inches long.

"Cuff, 9 inches round.

"From top to bottom, 3 feet 6 inches.

"I should tell you the King is clever with his needle, and his twenty-two wives are just as clever at farming.

"One boy wants to know what sort of work our Queen does."

The shirts had to be larger than above measurements to be loose on him.

33. *Driver-ants* (p. 144), when searching for food, march four or five abreast in a continuous line across country. I have known them to be three days and nights hurrying past a given point, and when disturbed they swarm over the ground. Looking

at the crowd of people thrown from the photographic slide on to the sheet impressed the King, and in comparing the numbers of people to driver-ants covering the ground, he used a very good simile.

34. *Dressed worse than slaves* (p. 147).—Except on very special gala days, the chiefs, head men, and freemen dressed in a very poor, unpretentious style. This was to avoid suspicion, jealousy, and the evil eye. Dressing badly, no one would know that they were rich, and consequently would not cast the evil eye on them, nor try to render them unlucky, etc., by the aid of witchcraft. The slaves were known as such, therefore it did not matter how well they arrayed themselves; no one would be jealous of them nor try to harm them by paying the fees of witch-doctors. Thirty years ago the casual visitor would, five times out of six, mistake the slave for the head man and the chief for a slave, or poor man, on account of the difference in their garments.

35. *Sleep well* (p. 148).—The morning greeting was: *Olele kiambote* = Have you slept well? The answer was: *Ndele kwame* = I have slept well. Good-night was: *Wenda leka kwambote* = Go and sleep well; and the answer: *Sala leka kwambote* = Stay and sleep well. To sleep properly and soundly was regarded as an infallible sign of good health.

36. *Papyrus string* (p. 148).—The papyrus (*diwu*) was found very plentifully in the many swamps around San Salvador, and was cut in lengths of about nine feet. The outer skin was peeled off, when fresh and green, in strips of half an inch, one end of the strip was held between the thumb and index finger of the left hand, and then the right hand very quickly twisted the strip, and to keep it from untwisting the two ends were tied together and it was thrown into the sun. When dry the strip would retain the twist, and, before using, a dozen of the twisted strips were soaked in water to render them pliable. Such string was commonly used for tying fences, and would last nearly twelve months, *i. e.* as long as the other materials in the fence. It was very economical and durable.

37. *Roasted plantain* (p. 149).—As a rule, bananas were eaten ripe and raw, and plantain green and roasted. Peel a nice large plantain, drop it in the hot ashes, turn it from side to side

until done, scrape off the ash-dirt, then split it, rub in some butter and salt, and with a very little imagination you have a hot roll.

38. *Portugal, Holland, or England* (p. 156).—In the long ago, Portugal was the only white man's country known to the natives, and it is just possible that Mputu (native name for all white countries) is a corruption and a shortening of Portugal. There were more Portuguese traders in Congo than from any other country; next after them were the Dutch or Hollandaise, and lastly, in numbers, the English, who at that time were only known as missionaries. The natives consequently thought that Portugal was a larger and more populous place than the other countries, then Holland the next in size, and lastly England, hence their discussion.

39. *Stretched out the legs in front of a chief* (p. 163).—To stretch out the legs (and show the soles of one's feet) before any one was regarded as extremely rude, and a mark of disrespect which was resented by him who had the power. To act so unceremoniously before a king or great chief was punished by fines, floggings, and sometimes death. It was worse than a man keeping on his hat in the presence of royalty.

40. *Rob them of their country and make them slaves* (p. 172).—These fears were constantly expressed in the early and middle eighties by both King and people. The following is the true history of how one treaty was made with a native king—

In 1884, a copy of *Le Mouvement Geographique* fell into my hands, and in it was a letter that was said to have been sent by Dom Pedro V, King of Congo, to the King of Portugal. In it the former acknowledged the latter as his liege lord and used every expression of fealty, loyalty, and submission. I remember that the letter was, at the time, put forward as a proof of the righteousness of the Portuguese claim to the Congo; and it certainly helped them in gaining a part of what is now called Portuguese Congo.

Having occasion to speak with the King about that time, I asked him if he had written the said letter, and I gave him a translation of it. The old man was sitting in a high-back, embossed, leather chair, and rising from it, he said, "My brother, the King of Portugal, sent me this chair, and I sent

him a letter thanking him for his gift, and that is the only letter I ever signed my mark to or ordered to be sent." He had signed away his country in saying "thank you for a chair."

Attached to the letter were the names of the head Portuguese Roman Catholic priest, a Portuguese trader, and a French trader, as witnesses to the King's mark. Shortly after reading this letter I met M. D——, the French trader, and told him I had just seen the said letter. I reminded him of its date, and asked, "Why was not I requested to sign this letter, for all the other white men in San Salvador signed it, and I was here on that date? Am I not a white man?"

M. D—— answered, "We did not ask you to witness the King's mark because we felt sure you would not do it until the King thoroughly understood the real purport of the letter."

I thanked M. D—— for his estimate of my character, and gave him my view of the manner in which they had deceived and defrauded the King.

The King thought he was saying: Thank you for a few presents sent him by a brother sovereign; but he was signing away his territory to another power, and in this way he and his people were defrauded of their true rights. They have every reason to hate white men for robbing them of their country and reducing them to slavery.

41. *Kill herself* (p. 181).—Suicide was not uncommon on the Lower Congo. Both men and women committed it for much the same reason as folk do in England.

42. *Oily-face* (p. 183).—A lightish skin (not the colour of a half-caste or an albino's skin) and an oily face were signs of beauty, hence the proverb: "The toad has an oily face where his father's sister is," *i. e.* A person is always beautiful to his own family.

43. *Girl's father of no importance* (p. 187).—On the Lower Congo there is mother-right but no father-right. The children belong to the mother's family and not to the father. He has no rights over them, nor does he arrange for the marriage of his daughters, and he receives a very small share only of the marriage money paid for his daughters.

44. *Rest claimed by the uncle* (p. 188).—(See also note 43.) The uncle was the head of his sisters' families and the guardian of their children, *i. e.* of his nieces and nephews. His eldest sister's eldest son was his heir. He helped his nephews when starting in life, and assisted each in paying the marriage money for his first wife, and arranged for the marriage of his nieces.

He claimed the great bulk of the marriage money for this reason: Suppose he received £3 for his niece, and after five years she died, her husband would come to the uncle and say, "I gave you £3 for the loan of your niece, and she is now dead. I want my money back, and as you have had the use of it for five years I expect 20s. interest on top." Now probably the uncle would not be able to pay this relatively large sum, and in lieu of it would give another woman as a wife to the man. In another five years, we will say, the second wife dies, and the husband goes to the uncle and says, "The second woman you let me have is dead, and as you have had the use of my money for ten years I want it returned with 40s. interest." (Sometimes they demand the equivalent of 80s. to 100s. interest.)

The uncle cannot meet so large a demand, so he gives another—the third—woman, and should she die the husband has no further claim either for the capital sum, interest, or another woman. Should the husband die, then his heir has the same claim on the uncle up to three women, or the money with interest; and if the uncle dies, then his heir who receives his property is responsible for the claims of the husband or of his heir up to three women or the money. (See note 54.) As the uncle took the greater risks, it was only right that he should take most of the money. Whatever the father received was his absolutely, without any risks.

45. *Girl received little presents* (p. 188).—After a man has paid a part or the whole of the marriage money, he will make presents of cloth, fish, meat and trinkets to his betrothed. Should the negotiations for her be broken off, he will put an exorbitant value on those presents, and complicate matters by his demands. An unbetrothed girl would not receive presents from a young man without the consent of her family, and if she did do so without such consent, and the young man applied to the family for her hand in marriage and was refused, he would demand all his presents back, or in lieu of them a most extortionate

price. Hence no girl would accept a present from a man unless she knew that her uncle and her family regarded his suit with favour. There are, of course, untractable nieces on the Congo as there are unreasonable daughters in Europe.

46. *Girl's mother agreed* (p. 188).—Every wise young man would by various presents gain the goodwill of his future mother-in-law, otherwise she could, under different pretexts, cause the marriage to be postponed, and make herself very disagreeable and objectionable when she could no longer hinder it.

47. *Sign of the cross* (p. 199).—In the latter part of the fifteenth century the Portuguese Roman Catholics were present in San Salvador, and during the next half-century they became predominant in the local, political, and religious life of the people. They introduced many superstitions, images, relics and rites. In the early eighties we saw Romish images used as fetishes, relics and the cross used as charms, and baptismal rites practised as a superstitious ceremony. The mark of the cross enters largely into the catalogue of the witch-doctor's stock-in-trade.

48. *I swear by my mother* (p. 205).—In the Congo language there is no lack of oath phrases. And these may be divided into four classes—

(1) Swearing by one's relations, as shown in the text. Any near relative may be substituted for mother. This may be extended into: By my mother, may I never see her deathbed, or may my mother desert me.

(2) Swearing by a notable person or place: By the great King. By Dom Alvaro. By the road to Congo. By the path to the tomb of the deceased King.

(3) Swearing by the fetishes; and this may be divided into two classes: (a) Those who swear by the ordinary fetishes, as: By the lightning fetishes (*nzaji*), etc., and (b) those who have been initiated into the *ndembo* guild and swear by the fetishes of this secret society, as: May the *nkita* cause me to go mad. By the *ndembo* enclosure. By albinos and dwarfs. These latter are all powerful in the *ndembo* guild. (See *Folk-Lore*, June 1909, p. 189.)

(4) Swearing by God, as: May God punish me.

49. *Nearest man fired* (p. 206).—Hunting laws were very stringent and had to be carefully observed, or the breaker of them would one day find that no one would accompany him on his hunts nor allow him to join them in theirs.

If a man fires at an antelope and it rushes away, the hunter looks to see if any blood has fallen, or any hairs; if not, it is decided that he has not killed it, although he may have mortally wounded it; if another man fires and it drops, it is the latter's animal. If there is any dispute as to whether it was killed by the first shot or the second, the one who is positive and over-rides all argument must take the heart of the antelope and eat it (not raw). If his shot really killed it all is well, but if not, the eating of the heart will destroy his *kinkongo*, or hunting skill. Many a man has relinquished his claim to an animal for fear of spoiling his luck.

50. *Brave* (p. 218).—When the natives fight with spears, knives and arrows they are courageous, and, knowing how far their weapons will carry, they run in to throw them. They will fight foot to foot with their knives. To them guns are mysterious things—they pull a trigger and there is a puff, a bang, and a bullet or slug flies out, and the distance it will travel is, to them, an unknown quantity. They are not acquainted with the science of firearms, and are so overawed by the mysteriousness of these weapons that their natural bravery has not full play.

51. *Some decoction* (p. 248).—The witch-doctor procures some bark of the baobab-tree, presses the juice out of it and rubs this on hand and arm of the accused person who has well paid him. He can then dare the boiling oil with impunity.

52. *In whose district his town* (p. 253).—The "parish" of Wathen is 3000 square miles in extent, and is divided into four and sometimes five districts, according to the strength of the missionary staff for the time being. Each district is in charge of a white man, and all the boys attending school on the station from that district are especially in his charge. He looks after their welfare, cares for them, attends them in sickness, listens to their palavers, and acts the part of a father to them. All the girls from the same district are in the special care of his wife (if he is a married missionary), and she acts as a mother to

them. All matters connected with the Church members and teachers of the district are taken first to him, and he settles them upon well-understood principles, and if any extraordinary issue arises he consults his colleagues, and they jointly come to a decision, so that all the districts may be governed on uniform lines. He acts also as a pastor towards all the Church members of his district.

53. *Sunset at six o'clock* (p. 257).—The nights and days are about equally divided, as there are only some fifteen minutes' difference during the whole year in the time of the sun's rising and setting. Certainly on the Congo there is not that sudden darkness at sunset so frequently stated in books on the tropics, for the twilight lasts from thirty to forty minutes.

54. *Women I have borrowed* (p. 324).—The old word on the Congo for marriage was *sompa nkento*, which means to borrow a woman (see notes 43 and 44), for which loan the man paid something to the girl's uncle. All members of the Church are married by Holy Matrimony, and the word *sompa* (or to borrow) has given place to *kazala* (to take as a wife).

PART II

Congo Folklore Tales

or

Stories told round the Congo Fire

INTRODUCTION TO THE FOLKLORE TALES

FOR many years I have been collecting folklore stories such as are told round the fires of the Congo villages—stories that have been handed down from generation to generation; and are so well known that sentences from them are often quoted, and have thus become the proverbs with which the natives so freely interlard their talk.

To have printed all the stories collected would have meant a bulky volume; but these selected for publication are typical of those that remain, although every story has its own peculiarity of plot, explanation, or teaching.

Between most of the stories told on the Upper Congo and those related on the Lower Congo there is, as a rule, this marked difference: the former try to explain why things are as they are, *i. e.* why people steal, lie and die; why women run away from their husbands; and why some birds have nests and other birds none: the latter are didactic parables. The former are explanatory of habits and customs, and the latter contain the wit, the wisdom and the moral teaching of many generations, and sum up their view of life—that the cheat will himself be cheated; that

the unreasonable will be outwitted by craftiness; the tyrant and bully will eventually be punished, and kindness rewarded with timely succour. I am of opinion that the former—the explanatory—stage indicates a more primitive state than the latter or teaching stage, still it would be a very interesting study to decide this point.

These stories belong to the Lower Congo, and more especially to the districts around San Salvador (Portuguese Congo), and Ngombe Lutete (or Wathen in Congo Belge). Some of the Upper River stories I hope to publish on a future occasion.

While living at San Salvador many years ago, the lads and I, on our recreation evenings, told each other tales, and it was then that I heard for the first time some of these stories; a few others I have culled from the pages of a native magazine called *Ngonde ye Ngonde* (=“Month by Month”), printed and published by our Mission at San Salvador; but by far the larger number were written for me by the teachers and boys of the Wathen Mission School to whom I gave exercise-books with the request that they would write out such stories as they could remember, or could gather from their friends.

I never suggested a story nor a plot to them, for to me personally they would lose their value if they were the result of any such promptings. It was not until a large number of them had been collected that any idea of presenting them in this

form entered the mind of the collector. And folklorists may rest assured that the stories here set before them are genuinely native in plot, situation, explanation and "teaching," and, wherever possible, in idiom also.

In these stories the different birds, insects, reptiles and animals speak, marry, attend markets, transact business and lay their cases for decision before the elders as though they were human beings. The heroes among them are endowed with those qualities most admired by the natives, while those that are "fooled" are the personification of such characteristics as awaken only their ridicule and contempt. 'Cuteness, craftiness and wit are at a premium in these stories, and it is curious to note that these qualities seem to be the peculiar property of the small animals, such as the gazelle, the mouse, the squirrel, etc.; and rarely the possession of the larger animals, as the elephant, buffalo and leopard; or when two species of the same order—the driver-ant and the small-ant—are brought into rivalry it is the latter that wins; two birds, as in "The Crow and the Dove," it is again the weaker one who triumphs in the end.

On the other hand gullibility, dupability, utter stupidity and lack of foresight are associated with bulk, *i. e.* the larger animals are, as a rule, thoroughly fooled. They have laughed many a time at the way the Gazelle "fooled" the Leopard, yet I do not think there was one who

would not rather have been the Leopard than the Gazelle—they were not so good as their philosophy.

Greediness in eating is condemned by all natives, and it is interesting to note that the only time, in these stories, the Gazelle is caught and punished it is his greediness that leads to his downfall; and, again, in the story of the Gazelle and the Palm-rat, the latter is choked, not so much because he broke his promise—that is regarded as 'cuteness by the natives—but because he refused to share the palm-nuts with his companion—an act condemned by all natives. This is a trait well marked in the native character. Any one of them will scramble and wrangle for as big a portion of anything going as he can get; but once he has it he will share it with any of his family, or his companions, or even with strangers who happen to be present when he is eating it.

Again and again, when I have given portions of food or salt to a boy, the recipient has shared it equally with his comrades. Here is a monkey to be divided among a dozen boatmen. Two of them will be set to clean it and divide it into twelve portions, and they will be very careful to make all the divisions equal, because by an unwritten law, which I have never seen infringed, the two who apportioned the meat will not take their shares until the others have selected theirs. This is a guarantee that all the portions will be alike, otherwise the last would come off very badly. Each as he chooses will select what he

considers to be the largest heap; but once he has it, he is quite willing to share it with any or all of his comrades.

There is a delightful absence of proportion in these stories, for in them mice and birds marry young women; a mouse carries the head of a leopard in his bag and brags that he has eaten nine leopards, and although he punishes the elephant and the buffalo he has to cry for help against the hyena; the gazelle eats whole pigs and goats; and a chameleon snarls and the elephant, leopard and other animals run away in terror. Nothing is strange or incongruous in a land where witch-doctors abounded, and were credited with performing wonders by their supposed magical powers. If you questioned any feat, you were at once told most emphatically: "Well, it was done by his magic, or his fetish, or his charm performed it."

In all the animal stories in this collection the different animals mostly address each other as "uncle," irrespective of sex; but as this would have been confusing to the reader, I have only retained the term where it fits the sex of the one addressed. In the Congo language there is no gender, and the animals belong to various classes (there are fifteen classes in the Lower Congo language); but directly they are used in stories, and have human characteristics ascribed to them, they are removed from their different classes and placed in the first, or personal, class, e.g. *Nsexi*

is in the second class, and its pronominal prefix is *i* singular, and *zi* plural; but being moved into the first class it becomes a person, and its prefix is *o* singular, and *be* plural—the animal is no longer an “it,” but a “he” or “she.”

Included in this collection are a few stories that are not animal ones, as “The Water-Fairies save a Child”—a warning to parents not to be unreasonable in their punishments; “The Story of two Young Women”—a lesson on vanity, and that wealth does not always bring happiness; and “The Adventures of the Twins”—a whimsical criticism on how human beings should be made in order to avoid the inconveniences, limitations and troubles that attend their present mode of construction.

The reader must not be surprised to find that some of these stories are similar to those made famous by Uncle Remus,¹ and the reason is not far to seek. About three generations ago the Congo natives were transported in large numbers as slaves to America, and naturally they carried with them their language and their stories. The *goobah* in *Uncle Remus* is a corruption of *nguba*, the Lower Congo word for peanut; and

¹ C. J. Harris, in his introduction to *Uncle Remus and His Sayings* (Ward, Lock and Co., 6d. edition) mentions Prof. J. W. Powell, of the Smithsonian Institute, and Herbert H. Smith as having found similar stories “in a number of languages, and in various modified forms.” The former among the North American Indians, and the latter among the South American Indians, and one in particular he has traced to India, and as far east as Siam. I would refer the reader to that Introduction for further details.

Brer Rabbit is the gazelle,¹ Brer Fox is the leopard, and the Tar-baby is the fetish called *Nkondi*; but in the Tar-baby a concession is made to civilization, for in Uncle Remus's account the image is covered with tar to account for Brer Rabbit sticking to it, whereas in what I believe to be the original story the *Nkondi* image causes the victim to stick by its own inherent fetish power. In "Cunnie Rabbit, Mr. Spider and the other Beef," there is a story of a Wax-girl, which has all the elements of the Tar-baby, and here again the wax that causes the sticking is a concession, I think, to civilization like the tar.

All raw natives would believe that a fetish by its own magical powers could hold tightly its victim without the aid of such extraneous things as tar and wax. It is apparent that the narrators have lost faith in the magical powers of their fetish, and have introduced the wax and the tar to render their stories a little more reasonable to themselves. It is interesting to note that when Brer Rabbit was thrown among the leaves of the briar bush he unsticks from the Tar-baby, and in the Leopard sticking to the *Nkondi* the Gazelle "cuts some leaves and made a charm to set the

¹ It is said there are no true gazelles in Africa, whether that is so or not I have found it convenient to translate the Congo word *nsexi* uniformly as gazelle. The *nsexi* is about eighteen inches high, of slight body, thin legs, whitey-brown stomach, and brownish-grey back, small, sharp-pointed horns, small head, and large pathetic eyes. The *nsexi* is very agile, and I suppose that the slaves from the Congo finding no such animal in their new home in America, used the rabbit as a substitute—also there are no leopards there, so they transferred his gullibility to the fox, wolf and bear.

Leopard free." One can discover many similarities between these stories and those told by Uncle Remus. There is little doubt that most, if not all, the stories of Remus were told around the Congo village fires before they delighted the hearts and lightened the burdens of the negro slaves on the southern plantations of America. Yet is Congo the original home of these stories? Or have they travelled far by devious ways, perhaps even doubling back in their course, so that their real home is now lost in antiquity, and the road to it obliterated by the swamps of time across which the human family has wandered in its many journeyings?

The natives in their talk often use phrases from their stories which are quite sufficient to recall to the hearers the whole fable and its teaching, as "sour grapes" with us conjures up the fox looking with longing eyes at the fruit beyond his reach. Many of these concentrated sentences have become the proverbs of to-day, and the Lower Congo language is rich in such *mots*, and one could, in fact, gain a very clear idea of the Congo man's philosophy from an analysis of the sentences culled from their stories which have become their maxims.

In these pages will be found some puzzle stories, such as "The Four Fools" and "The Four Wonders." These are propounded and cause no end of discussion as to which has performed the greatest feat of skill, and thus earned

the fowl that laid money (*i.e.* beads); and also who had committed the greatest wrong against the usual order of mundane affairs, and thus deserved the most blame. Each fool and each wonder-worker has his adherents, who will argue in his favour with so much vehemence and gesticulation that the listener who does not know them will think them on the verge of a most desperate fight. After long and toilsome journeys the writer has heard his carriers argue about these problem stories far into the night; and they would return again and again to the charge, each individual (or party) supporting his favourite character with all the natural eloquence at his command. Night after night they would revert to the same story in order to give expression to the arguments, in favour of their views, that had come into their minds through the day while journeying with their loads up and down the hills. One problem story has furnished them, sometimes, with sufficient discussion to last four or five nights.

The stories are told round the fire on nights that are too dark for dancing. The various groups will arrange themselves round the blazing hearths, and after the news of the day has been exhausted, one will tell a story suggested by some item of news, or the action of a friend, or the saying of an enemy. The story is told with dramatic power and forcible eloquence, the narrator acting the various parts and imitating the

sounds of the different animals. In some of the stories there are choruses, and these are taken up and sung heartily to the clapping of their hands.

There is no greater treat than to listen to a Congo story told in the original by one of these born story-tellers—the lights and shadows caused by the flickering fire, the swaying body of the narrator, the fixed attention and grunts of approval of the listeners, the great dark beyond, the many mystic sounds issuing from the surrounding bush and forest lend a peculiar weirdness to the story and its teller.

A father correcting his children will tell them a story to enforce his teaching, and though wise words might be forgotten, the story will remain in the memory with guiding or deterrent power; sons and daughters repeat these stories to their parents if they think they are not being properly treated according to native ideas.

During a lawsuit the native advocates in stating the case for their clients will tell stories with great effect, or will illustrate a point against their opponents by relating a parable suitable to the occasion; and the judge will often give his verdict by recounting a fable, and if they do not know one appropriate to the case they will invent one, and should it happen to be a happy invention it will pass from mouth to mouth, and thus into the folklore of the district; the current stories, known to all, are a survival of the fittest, and some of them are here placed before the reader.

CONGO FOLKLORE TALES

I

How the Fowl evaded his Debt

ONCE upon a time a cock Fowl and a Leopard began a friendship, and not very long afterwards the Leopard lent some money to the Fowl. It was arranged that on a certain day the Leopard should receive the money at the Fowl's residence.

On the morning of the appointed day the Fowl ground up some red peppers, and mixed them with water so that it looked like blood, and when he heard that the Leopard was on the way to his house he went into his courtyard and said to his slaves: "When the Leopard arrives and asks for me, tell him my head has been cut off and carried to the women in the farms to be combed and cleaned." Then he hid his head under his wings and told them to pour some of the pepper water on his neck, which they did, and it fell to the ground like blood.

The Leopard arrived and asked for his friend the Fowl. The slaves repeated what they had

been told, and, on the Leopard hearing it, he wished to be allowed a closer view of the marvel, and on beholding the red-pepper water dropping to the ground, he thought it was all true.

On returning later he asked the Fowl how it was done, and the Fowl replied: "When you reach your town, you cut off your head, and send it to the farm to be combed and cleaned, and there you are."

"Oh! thank you, friend," said the Leopard, "I will astonish the natives of my town."

Away he went to his town, and told all his wives that he had been taught some wonderful magic by his friend the Fowl.

"What is it?" they asked.

"Well, my head is cut off," said the Leopard, "and then you take it to the farm to comb and clean, and then you bring it back."

"All right," they cried in chorus.

The Leopard sent messengers to all the towns in his district, inviting the folk on a certain day to come and see the wonder. On the day a great crowd of people arrived, and when all was ready the Leopard went into the centre, and his head was cut off, but his legs gave way, and he fell down.

The head was returned after being combed and cleaned, but when they put it on the neck

it would not stay there. Thus died the Leopard because of his conceit in thinking he could do all that others did; and also because he did not use his common sense to perceive the foolishness of what the Fowl told him. Do not believe all you see and hear.

II

Why the Small-ant was the Winner

ONE day a fierce Driver-ant¹ and a Small-ant had a long discussion as to which of them was the stronger. The Driver-ant boasted of his size, the strength of his mandibles, and the fierceness of his bite.

"Yes, all that may be true," quietly answered the Small-ant, "and yet with all your size and strong jaws you cannot do what I can do."

"What is that?" sneeringly asked the Driver-ant.

"You cannot cut a piece of skin off the back of that man's hand, and drop it down here," replied the Small-ant.

"Can't I? All of you wait and see," said the Driver-ant.

Away he climbed up the man until he reached the back of his hand. At the first bite of the strong mandibles, the man started, and, looking down at his hand, saw the Driver-ant, picked it off, and dropped it dead at his feet right among the waiting crowd of ants.

¹ Driver-ant = *Nsongonia*. Small-ant = *Mfitele*.

The Small-ant then climbed to the place, and gently, softly, with great patience he worked round a piece of skin until it was loose, and he was able to drop it to the ground. The waiting throng of ants proclaimed him the winner, for he had done by his gentleness and patience what the other had failed to do by his strength and fierceness.

III

How the Animals imitated the Gazelle and brought Trouble upon Themselves

ONCE upon a time a Leopard gave birth to seven cubs, and she asked the Jackal to act as nurse for her while she was away hunting.

Shortly after the departure of the Leopard the Gazelle arrived, and said to the Jackal : " Let us eat one of the cubs and then you will have six left."

" What shall I do when the Leopard returns?" asked the Jackal.

" Oh ! I will help you," quickly promised the Gazelle.

Thereupon the Jackal gave up a cub, and then another, and another, until at last all the cubs were eaten.

The Gazelle then tied the Jackal to a tree and said : " When you hear the Leopard coming, shout out loudly, ' Murder ! Thieves ! ' "

In a little time the Jackal heard the Leopard bounding through the forest, and he began to cry

out: "We are robbed! we are robbed! Help! Thieves!"

"What is the matter? What are you crying about?" asked the Leopard.

"Oh!" sobbed the Jackal, "I don't know at all who tied me up, but all of your children are eaten." The Leopard, on hearing this, was very angry.

The reckless, daring Gazelle scampered off, and by and by reached a place where all the animals were gambling with dice. A Pigeon gave him the dice to throw, and the Gazelle threw a "Leopard" (the name of a winning throw). "Oh, dear me!" said the Gazelle, when he saw his luck, "I have eaten seven young leopards, and nothing has happened to me."

The other animals thought this was a lucky saying, so they repeated the words every time they threw the dice. The Gazelle warned them not to imitate the sayings of others, or trouble would come upon them. But they, thinking he only wanted to keep his good luck to himself, repeated the words more earnestly. The Gazelle slipped away to call the Leopard, and begged her not to be angry with what she would hear.

The Leopard went to the games, and when she heard one animal after another say: "Oh, dear me! I have eaten seven young leopards, and

nothing has happened to me," she became so angry that she fought with the different animals and killed them all. As for the Gazelle, he took himself out of the way. Thus the animals, through apeing others, lost their lives.

IV

Why the Fowls never shut their Doors

THERE lived once a chief who owned a large number of Fowls. On arising early one morning he found that the door of their house had been left open all night. He thereupon woke up the Head Cock and asked why he had not shut the door.

The Cock replied: "We did not go to sleep very early last night, as we quarrelled over who should shut the door. I told one to do it, and he told another, and at last we became so angry with each other that no one would shut the door, so we went to sleep leaving it open."

The owner snapped his fingers in speechless surprise at the Fowl's excuse, and walked away.

Another day the chief went to see his wives' farms and found them all clean and well weeded, but the road leading to the farms, which was nobody's work, was choked with tall grass and weeds. That evening the chief called out loudly so that all the town could hear: "You women, I went to your farms to-day, and found the road covered with tall grass and weeds. Truly you

380 Why Fowls never shut their Doors

are near relatives of the fowls, who sleep with open door because each tells the other to shut it. To-morrow all of you go and clear the road."

When the Fowls heard these remarks they were very vexed, and the Cock said : " You have heard what our owner has shouted out to the whole town. He has held us up as a bad example to all in the place, yet when I went to a neighbouring town the day before yesterday I saw a buffalo rotting by the roadside."

" Why was it rotting there? " asked the Black Hen of her husband.

The Cock replied : " When I reached the town the other day I heard that Don't-care, who is the son of Peter Pay-if-you-like, went outside his house and saw a buffalo; he aroused his companions and told them to go and shoot it; but they said : ' Go and shoot it yourself.' ' What! am I to see the buffalo and shoot it also? ' he asked. Thereupon Wise-man fired at the buffalo, and told another to go and see if it were killed. He came back and said it was wounded; so another went and killed it; but he would not cut it up; and another went and cut it into pieces. Then each thought that the other should carry the flesh into the town; consequently it was left in the bush, and that was why the buffalo meat rotted at the roadside."

The Black Hen said: "Indeed, is that so?" But the Speckled Hen observed: "That it would be better for human beings if they looked better after their own business, instead of poking their noses into affairs belonging to Fowls, and holding them up as a bad example to their women."

The Head Cock said: "That from that day neither he, nor his children, nor his grandchildren should ever shut the doors of their houses, no matter how cold it might be, or what risks they might run of being eaten by wild animals." Thus it is that Fowls never shut their doors at night. They are angry that human beings, who conduct their own affairs so badly, should find fault with the way in which Fowls look after theirs.

V

Why the Dog and the Palm-rat hate each other

ONE day the Dog, the Palm-rat, the Hawk, and the Eagle arranged to take a journey together, but before starting they agreed not to thwart each other in any matter.

They had not gone very far when the Eagle saw a bunch of unripe palm-nuts, and said: "When these palm-nuts are ripe, and I have eaten them, then we will proceed on our way."

They waited many days until the palm-nuts ripened and were eaten by the Eagle, then they started again, and by and by the Hawk espied the bush (a great space covered with tall grass, canes, and stunted trees), and said: "When this bush is burnt, and I have eaten the locusts, and drunk in the smoke from the fire, then we will go."

So they waited while the bush dried, and was burnt, and the Hawk ate his locusts, and drank in the smoke from the burning grass, then they were ready to start again; but when the Palm-rat saw the bush was burnt, he said: "We remain here until the grass and canes have grown again,

so that I may eat the young canes, for remember we agreed not to thwart or oppose each other on this journey."

They waited there some months until the canes grew again, and the Palm-rat had eaten them.

Once more they started on their travels, and on reaching a large forest the Dog said: "Now I will dry my nose."

His companions answered: "All right, we will go for firewood."

The Palm-rat and the Hawk fetched the wood, and the Eagle went for the fire. The Dog put his nose near the fire, but every time it dried he made it wet again by licking it. They remained a long time in the forest, but the Dog's nose never became properly dry: it was an endless job. His companions became vexed, and the Hawk and the Eagle flew away, leaving the Palm-rat and the Dog alone. At last the patience of the Palm-rat was exhausted, and he, too, ran away; but the Dog chased him to kill him, and this is the reason why the Dog and the Palm-rat hate each other. He would not wait until the Dog's nose was dry.

VI

The Leopard boils his Mother's Teeth

ONE day the Gazelle bought some maize at the market, and while he was boiling them at home, the Leopard paid him a visit, and asked him: "Friend Gazelle, what are you boiling in the saucepan?"

The Gazelle replied: "I am boiling my mother's teeth."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the Leopard, "let me taste them." So the Gazelle gave him some of the cooked maize, and the Leopard ate them, and thought them so good that he went home and pulled out all his mother's teeth, and put them to boil in a saucepan.

The Gazelle, passing the house, called in, and seeing the saucepan on the fire, asked the Leopard what he was cooking. "I am cooking my mother's teeth, but they don't get soft," answered the Leopard.

The Gazelle laughingly said: "I meant maize, and you have pulled out and are boiling all your mother's teeth." The Leopard was so angry at what he had foolishly done, that he drove the

Gazelle off and wanted to kill him, but the Gazelle ran away and hid in a log of wood.

The Leopard, returning from his pursuit of the Gazelle, saw the firewood and carried it home, and, as he was splitting it, out jumped a fine dog. The Leopard admired the dog so much that he told his wives never to beat it.

One day one of the wives pointed her finger at it, and the dog was so insulted at having a finger pointed at him that he howled so long and loudly that the Leopard came and killed his wife for insulting his dog; and thus he killed them one after the other; and when they were all dead, the dog changed back into a Gazelle, and ran away laughing at the Leopard for his foolishness in mistaking maize for teeth, and a Gazelle for a dog.

VII

How the Ants saved the Partridge's Eggs

ONCE upon a time a Partridge having laid her eggs, was driven from them by a Python, who took possession of them by coiling herself round and round the eggs.

The Partridge, seeing she had been deprived of her eggs, began to call for help. A Buffalo, hearing her, came and asked what was the matter.

The Partridge said: "The Python has rolled herself round my eggs, and I want a wise body to save them for me."

"Don't worry," said the Buffalo, "I will go and stamp on her."

"Not you," cried the Partridge; "while you are stamping on her you will smash my eggs. I am looking for a *wise body* to help me."

The Partridge continued to call, and the Elephant came asking what was the matter.

"Oh!" sobbed the Partridge, "the Python has curled round my eggs, and I want a wise body to save them."

"Never mind," replied the Elephant, "I will go and smash her to pulp."

"Not you," cried the Partridge, "you will break all my eggs."

So one animal after another offered help, but they were rejected, as they could not drive the Python away without endangering the eggs. The poor Partridge was at her wits' end, when an army of Driver-ants arrived and inquired the reason of her calling for help. When they heard the cause they marched right up to where the Python was, and at once began to nip, nip, nip with their strong mandibles, and the Python unrolled herself and glided away as fast as she could. Thus the Ants rescued the stolen eggs that would otherwise have been broken by the clumsy attempts of the Buffalo and the Elephant.

VIII

The Leopard sticks to the *Nkondi* (Wooden Image)

IN the long ago both the Leopard and the Gazelle made new maize farms. When the ground was ready for planting, the Gazelle put some maize in a saucepan to boil, and hid the rest of his maize in another place. While the pot was on the fire the Leopard arrived, and asked: "Friend Gazelle, what are you boiling?"

"Some maize," said the Gazelle, "and when it is cooked I am going to plant maize in my farm."

The Leopard exclaimed, "Indeed! do you plant boiled maize?"

"Yes," answered the Gazelle. "I boil all my maize, for then it grows better."

The Leopard returned home at once and rubbed all his maize off their cobs, and boiled the maize. The next morning they both went and planted their maize in their farms. During the following night, however, the Gazelle went and planted some unboiled maize in the Leopard's farm.

After a few days they went to have a look at their farms, and in the Gazelle's the whole of the

maize was sprouting well, but in the Leopard's only the raw maize the Gazelle had planted was growing. The Leopard could not understand it, for he said: "I well boiled all my maize, and yet it does not grow."

By and by the maize was ripe for plucking, and the Gazelle and Leopard went and pulled what they wanted and returned home. For several nights after that the Leopard went stealing maize in the Gazelle's farm, and one day the Gazelle said to him: "Friend Leopard, who is stealing maize from my farm?"

"I don't know," replied the Leopard. The Gazelle carved a wooden fetish called the *Nkondi*, and put it in his farm.

The next night the Leopard went and stole some more maize, and as he was leaving the farm the *Nkondi* said: "Oh, you are the thief, are you?"

"If you talk like that," growled the Leopard, "I will hit you."

"Hit me," said the *Nkondi*. The Leopard hit him, and his paw stuck to the image.

"Let go," cried the Leopard, "or I will hit you with my other hand."

"Hit me," repeated the *Nkondi*. The Leopard hit him with the other hand, and that stuck also to the image.

“Let go,” angrily cried the Leopard, “or I will kick and bite you.” Which he at once did, as the *Nkondi* would not let him go, and his feet and mouth stuck to the image; then both the Leopard and the *Nkondi* fell to the ground together.

By and by the Gazelle arrived, and when he saw the Leopard sticking to the *Nkondi* he said : “Oh, you are the thief,” and, having punished him, he cut some leaves and made a charm to set the Leopard free. After that the Leopard never again went stealing in the Gazelle’s maize farm.

IX

How the Mouse won his Wife

ON one occasion a daughter was born to a lonely pair, and the father said : " Any one who wants to marry my daughter must first cut down the mahogany tree standing in my garden." Years passed, and when the father was dying he sent and told his wife that only he who felled the mahogany tree could marry his daughter.

By and by an Elephant arrived, and, sitting down in the town, asked the girl for a drink of water. She poured some water into a calabash and gave it to him, and he then asked her : " Are you married?" and she replied : " No, I am not yet married." The Elephant said : " I will marry you." Whereupon the mother called out : " You can marry her; but you must first cut down the mahogany tree." The Elephant took an axe and cut, cut, cut until he was tired, and then went and rested under the eave of the house so long that when he went again to the tree it was just as it was before he cut it. When the Elephant saw that, he threw down the axe, saying : " It is not my wedding, the woman costs too much."

As the Elephant was going away he met the Buffalo, and told him all about it, saying: "I came to marry, but I am not able to fell the tree." The Buffalo picked up the axe and cut, cut, cut, and then rested under the verandah of the house. When he returned to the tree he found it had grown again to its former size. Down he threw the axe and bolted.

As the Buffalo was rushing away a Lion shouted out: "Where have you come from?" The Buffalo stopped and told him all his troubles. "Oh," said the Lion, "give me an axe, I'll marry her." But the same thing happened to him, and to the Hyena, and to the Leopard also. They all cut at the tree, got tired, rested too long, and each ran away, saying: "I came to marry, but the girl is not worth the trouble."

As the Leopard was bounding away, a Mouse asked him: "What is the matter?" and the Leopard growled out: "I went to marry a woman, but whoever marries her must fell the mahogany tree." Thereupon the Mouse went and gnawed, gnawed, gnawed without stopping, until at last the tree toppled over and fell to the ground. When the mother saw the tree fall, she said: "Mouse, you can sleep here, and in the morning take your wife."

In the morning they cut up six pigs and twenty

loaves, then the Mouse took his wife, and they started on their journey to his town. They reached a stream where they camped for a time, and while there the Elephant arrived, and the Mouse said to him: "See, this is my wife."

The Elephant would not agree to that, but said: "She is mine, I married her."

"No," said the Mouse, "she is mine. Accept of two pigs for dinner."

When the Elephant heard that, he began to beat the Mouse, but the Mouse entered his trunk and gave him such pain that the Elephant cried: "Come out, and I will give you two pigs." The Mouse came out, received his two pigs, and went off with his wife.

They reached another camping-place, and while resting and eating there, the Buffalo arrived. "Welcome to you, father," said the Mouse. But the Buffalo did not want his welcome, and said he had married the woman, and when the Mouse would not give her up, the Buffalo hit him on the back with a stick. The Mouse entered the Buffalo's ear and gave him so much pain that he bellowed: "Come out, and I will give you five sheep." The Mouse came out, received his five sheep, and went away with his wife.

As they journeyed along they met the Hyena, who said: "Why, that is my wife," and when the

Mouse denied it, the Hyena became very angry, and beat the Mouse about in his weakness and made him cry. The Mouse called the Squirrels, who came and fought the Hyena, and while they were fighting, the Mouse hurried off with his wife.

They travelled until they came to a high plateau, where they met a large Rat, who said : "Give me that woman."

To him the Mouse replied : "I cannot give her, for I have had plenty of trouble to gain her."

"Very well," answered the Rat; "let us go to the drinking-booth, and I will give you some palm-wine."

While sitting there the Mouse took a rat's head out of his bag.

"Where did you get that?" asked the Rat.

"Oh," boasted the Mouse, "I have eaten nine rats, and you will be the tenth." So alarmed was the Rat that he ran away and never said "Good-bye."

At last the Mouse reached his town and gave his wife a house. There they feasted on the pigs and sheep they had gained on the road. But one day the Leopard paid a visit to the Mouse, and said : "Uncle Mouse, let us jointly make a maize farm." This they did, and while the Mouse was watching the maize one day, the Leopard tried to run away with his wife. The Mouse, hearing

this, invited the Leopard to drink wine in his house, and while they were drinking, the Mouse took out of his bag a Leopard's head.

"Where did you get that?" asked the Leopard.

"Down in the drinking-booth I killed and ate nine," said the Mouse, and you will be the tenth." The Leopard was so frightened at this, that when the Mouse told him to get into the calabash, he went right in at once. The Mouse put in the cork, and then put the calabash on the fire, and thus the Leopard died. The Mouse said: "I will govern in this country, for there is not another chief left." Thus was the Mouse rewarded for his courage, wit, and perseverance.

X

The Gazelle outwits the Leopard

ONCE upon a time a Leopard and a Gazelle lived together with their wives and families in the same town. One day the Leopard said: "Friend Gazelle, let us go and buy some drums in the Zombo country." "All right," replied the Gazelle; but where is the money?" "I have the money by me," answered the Leopard.

They started, and when they had walked a little way the Leopard growled out: "Wait here. I must return to the town, as I have forgotten something." The Leopard returned to the town and went to the Gazelle's wife and said: "My friend has sent me for his children." Mrs. Gazelle gave them to him, and putting them into a bag, he returned to the place where he left the Gazelle. They started again, and when they had travelled a long distance the Leopard saw some honey in a hole in one of the trees, whereupon he said to the Gazelle: "Wait for me here while I go to eat the honey, but you must not undo the sack."

The Gazelle was left to guard the sack, which he untied, and looking in, he exclaimed: "Why, they are my children!" He put the sack on his back and hurried to the town, gave his children back to his wife, and went to the Leopard's house and said: "My friend has sent me for his children." Mrs. Leopard gave them to him. He put them in the sack and returned quickly to the spot where the Leopard had left him. After a time the Leopard arrived, licking the honey off his lips, and, picking up the bag, away they went again on their journey. By and by they reached Zombo and bought some drums, and when the Leopard paid the money for them, he whispered: "Don't undo the bag now, there are some gazelles in it."

As they were returning home they tried the drums. The Leopard beat a tune and sang: "The stupid people go on foolish journeys." For the Leopard thought the Gazelle had helped to sell his own children for drums. The Gazelle then beat a tune and sang: "At the place where they ate honey they left their bag of wisdom." The Leopard did not know he had exchanged his own children for drums.

On their way home they played and sang in many towns, and received goats and pigs as presents for their entertainment. On reaching

398   **The Gazelle outwits the Leopard**

their town the Gazelle hurried to his house, and sent off his wife and children to hide.

The Leopard went to his house, and, looking round, he asked his wife: "Where are my children?" "Why, you sent the Gazelle for them," she replied; "and now you ask: 'Where are the children?'" The Leopard went in great rage to the Gazelle's house, but the Gazelle ran away, and as he was escaping, he cried out: "I am the wise Gazelle who has outwitted your craftiness."

XI

The Gazelle punishes the Palm-rat for breaking his promise

ONE day a Gazelle, being very hungry, went in search of food, and saw a fine bunch of palm-nuts hanging from a palm-tree; but having only hoofs he could not climb the tree. He therefore went in search of his friend the Palm-rat, and said to him: "I know where there is a fine bunch of palm-nuts, and if you will promise to give me some I will show you where it is."

The Palm-rat readily promised to share the nuts. So together they went to the forest, and the Gazelle pointed out the nuts to his friend. With his strong, sharp claws the Palm-rat quickly mounted the palm-tree, and found there three bunches of palm-nuts; but instead of cutting them down, he sat on a palm-frond and began to eat them.

After a time the Gazelle shouted out: "Friend Palm-rat, throw me down some of the nuts according to your promise."

"Oh," cried the Palm-rat, "when I am eating

400   **The Gazelle punishes the Palm-rat**

I am deaf, and cannot hear what is said to me.” And he continued to munch away at the nuts.

The Gazelle waited a little, and again called out: “Please throw me some of the palm-nuts, for I have hoofs, and cannot climb a tree like you.” But the Palm-rat ate greedily on, and took no notice of his friend’s request, except to say that he was deaf when eating.

The Gazelle thereupon gathered some leaves, grass, twigs, and stubble, and made a large fire at the bottom of the palm-tree. In a short time the Palm-rat called out: “Uncle Gazelle, put out your fire, the heat and smoke are choking me.”

“Oh,” replied the Gazelle, “when I am warming myself by the fire I cannot hear what is said to me.” And he heaped more firewood and dried grass on the fire.

The Palm-rat, choking with the smoke, lost his grip on the tree, and fell to the ground dead. The Gazelle returned to the town and took possession of all the goods belonging to the Palm-rat. If you make a promise, keep it; and if you want a kindness shown to you, you must do kind things to others.

XII

How the Crow cheated the Dove and got into Difficulty through it

A LONG time ago the Crow and the Dove arranged to go hunting together. They took with them their guns, charms, dogs, and chief huntsman. The dogs entered the bush and started an animal which the Dove fired at and killed. Then up ran the Crow shouting: "It is mine, it is mine."

"No," said the Dove; "I killed it."

"It is mine," asserted the Crow, and although they tried to argue with him, he would not listen, but only shouted more loudly: "It is mine."

At last the Dove gave way, and thus it was every time they went hunting—the Crow always cheated the Dove out of his game by his loud blustering cry: "It is mine. It is mine."

One day, while hunting, the Dove accidentally shot the chief huntsman, and no sooner did the Crow hear the report of the gun than he came running and calling out: "It is mine, it is mine. I shot it," but on drawing near and seeing the

body of the huntsman, he said to the Dove :
“It is yours.”

“No,” replied the Dove; “you have said ‘It is mine’ every time I have killed game, and now this is yours also.” They talked long and loudly about the matter, and at last they laid the case before the elders in the town.

The elders said to the Crow : “Yes, it is yours. You have claimed everything before, now take this also, and bury the body properly, and pay all the expenses of the funeral.” There are many people like the Crow, who take all the credit to themselves, and leave the blame to others.

XIII

How the Civet and the Tortoise lost their Friendship for each other

THE Tortoise and the Civet, although they lived in separate towns, had a great friendship for each other. Their kindness to one another was known to all the neighbours, for they never refused to help one another in sickness and trouble.

One day the Civet heard that her friend the Tortoise had given birth to a child, so at once she got ready to pay the usual visit. On arriving at the cross-road leading to her friend's town, she met a Monkey, who asked her where she was going.

The Civet said : " I am going to visit my friend the Tortoise, who has given birth to a child."

Monkey said : " Don't you go. Her child is very ill, and the " medicine man " says that he must have the tip of your tail with which to make a charm to cure the child, and it won't be better until he has it. Of course, if you go it is your own affair."

When the Civet heard this she became very

angry at the insult, and returned at once to her own house. The Tortoise was very indignant at the neglect of her friend the Civet, because from the commencement of her illness she never received a visit from her. For a very long time they never visited each other.

By and by the Tortoise heard that her friend the Civet had given birth to a child. The Tortoise said: "Although the Civet never visited me, I will not treat her in the same way, for I will go to see her."

She started on her journey, and on reaching the cross-roads she met Monkey there, who asked her where she was going. On hearing she was on the way to visit the Civet, Monkey said: "You are truly very stupid. The Civet's baby is very ill, and she has sent for the "medicine man," who says he cannot possibly cure the child unless he has the shell of the Tortoise for a charm."

On hearing this the Tortoise was dumbfounded and filled with fear, so she returned home at once.

After a very long time the Civet and the Tortoise met at the funeral festivities of a friend, and they frowned at each other and would not speak. Towards the close of the festivities, the Civet and the Tortoise told the chief and the elders all about their former love for one another,

and how the friendship had been broken by each hearing what the other wanted as a charm to cure her child.

The elders restored the love they had for each other, and told the Civet and the Tortoise that in future they were not to listen to any tales, but if one did hear anything against the other she was to go and ask her friend about it, and not keep it in her heart. From that time they remained fast and true friends.

XIV

The Water-Fairies save a Child

PEDRO was a trader in birds, and travelled long distances to buy and sell them, and as he often had some left he carried them home to keep until next market day. Pedro had six children, one of whom was a boy named Yakob, and the others were all girls. When Pedro was leaving the town one day for a trading journey to a very distant market, he said to his people: "There are some birds in that house, and if any one lets them out and loses them I will kill him."

Soon after his father was gone Yakob thought he would like to look at the birds, so went and pushed open the door to peep in, and as he did so the birds flew out and escaped to the forest. Yakob went crying to his mother, and told her what he had done. His mother chided him for disobeying his father's orders.

By and by Pedro returned from his journey, and, going to the house where he had left his birds, he found they were gone. He was very angry, and wanted to know who had let his birds

out of the house, and on being told it was Yakob, he took the boy, killed him, and threw his body in the river. Some Water-fairies found the body and restored it to life, and nursed the boy, fed him, and kept him with them until he grew to be a young man.

One day the Water-fairies said to him: "Yakob, you had better go for a walk and see the country." So he took his *biti*¹ and went walking and playing his instrument. He met his sisters, and began to sing: "That which the father had cut and thought he had killed, stand out of the way, girls, and let him pass." But the sisters did not recognize him—they simply smiled at him for his song. He told them who he was, and they returned to their town and told their mother and father that they had seen and spoken with their brother, but their father said: "Oh, no, it was not your brother, it was only a passer by."

Yakob went back to his fairy mothers, and told them that he had seen his sisters, and then he gathered his things together and asked permission to return to his own people. They gave him some fine cloths to wear, and various bells, which they tied on him, so that when he walked the bells tinkled and made a pleasant sound; then they gave him a cane, and said: "When you

¹ Musical instrument like a *marimba*.

reach the stream you hit that place and the other place." Yakob said : "I thank you with all my heart." So, bidding them good-bye, he started for his town with only three servants.

When Yakob reached the stream he did as he was told, and on beating one place, out came a band of trumpeters with ivory and brass trumpets. He hit the other place, and out came a fine hammock and carriers. He got into the hammock and sent messengers to tell the chief that he was approaching.

The chief spread his carpet and sat in his chair amid the clapping of his people, and in a short time the sound of the trumpet was heard and the carriers trotted up with Yakob's hammock, spread his carpet and arranged his chair, and then Yakob alighted from his hammock and sat down amid the shouting, drumming, and clapping of the people.

On taking his seat, Yakob said : "I am your son whom you killed. What you threw away the Water-fairies picked up, and they have nursed me and kept me until this day. There is a proverb which says : 'If the Leopard gives birth to a palm-rat he does not eat it.' You should have punished me for breaking your law, but you should not have killed me." The father was astonished, and went and kneeled crying before

his son, and said: "My child, forgive me, for I have done wrong."

Yakob's mother was glad to see her son again; he dressed her in fine cloth, and built his own village close by his parents'.

XV

How the Squirrel repaid a Kindness

THERE was once a man named Tunga who had a house, a wife, and a nice little baby. Tunga used to catch partridges, guinea-fowls, palm-rats and squirrels in his traps, and sometime he would trap three and four of these at once. One day he caught as many as fifteen partridges, and when he took them home his wife said: "We will save some of these for another day, so that our child may not be hungry should you not catch any." But Tunga said: "No, we will eat them all now, for I am sure to catch plenty of meat every day."

Some time after Tunga went to look at his traps, and found only one Squirrel in them, and this Squirrel had some bells round its neck, and just as Tunga was going to kill it, the Squirrel said: "Oh, please don't kill me, and I will help you another day."

Tunga laughed and said: "How can a little thing like you help me?"

But the Squirrel pleaded for his life and

promised to help the man whenever he was in trouble, so at last Tunga let the Squirrel go. He then plucked some leaves and went home to his wife and told her what he had done. She was very angry, and quarrelled so much about there being no food for the baby to eat, that she picked up the child and went off to her own family, which lived in a distant town.

The man waited some days until he thought his wife's anger had passed away, and then he took a large calabash of palm-wine and started for his wife's town. On arriving at the cross roads Tunga met an Imp that had neither arms, legs, nor body, but was all head, like a ball. The Imp said: "Let me carry your calabash for you. You are a great man and should not carry it yourself."

"How can you carry it, when you are all head and no body?" asked Tunga.

"Oh, you will see," said the Imp, as he took the calabash, balanced it on his head, and went bounding off along the road in front of Tunga.

After travelling a long way Tunga became very tired, so they sat down under a tree to rest, and while they were sitting there a Leopard came up, and noticing the palm-wine, asked for a drink, and the man was too much afraid to refuse it. When Tunga was going to pour out some of the

palm-wine into a glass, the Leopard said: "I drink out of my own mug, not yours," and he brought out of his bag the skull of a man, and said: "Here is a mug. I have already eaten nine men and you will be the tenth."

Poor Tunga was so filled with fear that he did not know what to do; but by and by a Squirrel arrived, and after exchanging greetings he asked for some of the palm-wine, and as Tunga was going to pour it out the Squirrel said: "What! Have you no respect for me? I carry my own mug," and putting his hand into his bag, he brought out the head of a Leopard, and said: "There, I have eaten nine Leopards, and this one here will be the tenth," and as he repeated the words again and again very fiercely the Leopard began to tremble, and go backwards until he was in the road, and then he turned tail and fled with the Squirrel after him.

Tunga waited, and at last he and the Imp started again on their journey. He was now glad that he had been kind to the Squirrel and had saved his life.

On reaching the town, Tunga and the Imp were welcomed by the people, a good house was given to them, and they were well feasted. After resting there some days, Tunga and his wife started on their return journey home, but before

leaving the town Mrs. Tunga's family gave them a goat as a parting present.

When they reached the cross-roads Tunga said to the Imp: "I will kill the goat here, and give you your half."

"All right," said the Imp; "but you must also give me half of the woman."

"No," replied Tunga; "the woman is my wife, but you shall have half the goat."

The Imp became very angry and called to his friends, and a great crowd of Imps came to fight Tunga.

While they were wrangling, the Squirrel arrived and asked what was the cause of the row. They told him, and he said: "If we divide the goat and the woman, how are you going to cook them? You have neither firewood nor water. Some of you fetch water, and others go for firewood."

He opened his box and gave to some of them a calabash in which to fetch water, but while the water was running into the calabash it sung such a magic tune that the Imps began to dance, and could not stop dancing.

Then the Squirrel opened his box again and let loose a swarm of bees that stung the other Imps so badly that they all bounded away and never returned again to trouble Tunga. Then the Squirrel said to Tunga: "You now see that if

414   **The Squirrel repays a Kindness**

you had not been merciful to me I should not have been able to save you from the Leopard and the Imps. Your kindness to me has saved your own life and your wife's." Tunga thanked him for his help and went his way home.

XVI

The Kingfisher deceives the Owl

ONE day the Owl and the Kingfisher had a long discussion as to which of them could go longest without food. The Owl proposed that they should try for ten days, and the Kingfisher agreed to it.

They tied a rope across a stream, and both birds sat on the middle of it looking down into the water. On the third day the Kingfisher began to feel hungry, and observing a fish in the water just below him, he pretended to fall, caught and gobbled the fish, but as he came up to the surface of the water he cried out: "Oh, Uncle Owl, my head turned giddy, and I fell into the stream."

The Owl replied: "Never mind, let us persevere with our contest."

But the Kingfisher continued to have these giddy fits just as fish came under the perch, and the Owl with his sleepy eyes did not notice the fish. Before many days had passed the Owl's body became thin, he lost his strength, fell into the stream and was drowned; but as for the Kingfisher he flew away, leaving his dead and cheated rival in the water.

XVII

How the Tortoise was punished for his Deceit

THE Tortoise set his trap, and soon afterwards caught an antelope in it, whereupon he sat down and began to cry with a loud voice. The Jackal, hearing his cries, came and asked him what was the matter, and the Tortoise said : "There is an animal killed in my trap, and I have no one to take it out."

The Jackal said : "Never mind, I'll remove it for you." So he took out the animal and set the trap again.

The Tortoise said to him : "Go and get some leaves upon which we can cut up the meat." But while the Jackal went for the leaves the Tortoise ran away with the meat to his hole in the rock.

The Jackal, on his return, called out : "Uncle Tortoise, here are the leaves;" but the Tortoise rudely cut him short by asking him : "Am I a relative on your mother's side or your father's?"

The Jackal, angry at this insult, cried out : "I will let off your trap;" and the Tortoise replied : "Touch the spring with your head, for if you put in either your arm or your leg you will die."

So the stupid Jackal put his head into the trap and was caught, and when he cried out with pain the Tortoise took his gun and shot him. In this way the Civet-cat, the Fox, the rock Rabbit, and the Palm-rat were all caught and killed by the Tortoise.

One day the Gazelle heard the Tortoise crying, and went and asked him why he was crying, and the Tortoise said: "Since early morning an animal has been lying dead in my trap because I have no one to take it out for me."

"But who set your trap for you?" asked the Gazelle.

He replied: "A passer-by set it for me."

"All right," kindly said the Gazelle, "I'll take it out for you"; which he did at once, and setting the trap again he dragged the animal to the Tortoise.

"Get some plantain leaves that we may divide the meat," said the Tortoise; but while he was gone the Tortoise took all the meat to his hole.

The Gazelle, on returning, called out: "Uncle Tortoise, here are the leaves," but the Tortoise laughingly asked him: "Is the Tortoise a relative on your mother's side, or your father's?"

The Gazelle was angry at this insult, and said: "I'll unset your trap."

"Very well," shouted the Tortoise, "only 'do

418   **The Tortoise punished for Deceit**

it with your head, and not with your hands or your feet, or you will die."

The Gazelle, however, poked in a stick, and snap went the spring, and out loudly screamed the Gazelle, so the Tortoise thought he was caught, and came out of his hole with his gun to shoot him, but the Gazelle sprang on the Tortoise, took away his gun and killed him, and then, gathering up the meat, he went off to his own town. The Biter is eventually bit, and he who deceives others will himself be deceived.

XVIII

How the Frog collected his Debt from the Hawk

THE Hawk lived in sky-land and the Frog lived on the earth. One day the Hawk paid a visit to the Frog, and said to him : " Friend Frog, will you kindly lend me a thousand brass rods, for I am in difficulty for want of money? "

The Frog replied : " Your town is up in the sky, and I cannot fly up there for I have neither feathers nor wings. "

" Oh, you will not need to call for your money, for I will surely bring it to you down here, so please lend me the brass rods. " The Frog counted out the thousand rods and handed them to the Hawk.

For six months the Frog heard nothing from the Hawk, neither was any part of the debt paid, so one day, seeing the Hawk on a low branch he went to ask for his money, but the Hawk flew away as fast as his wings would carry him.

Then the Frog heard that the Hawk went every *Nkandu*¹ and *Nkenge*¹ to market to buy saucepans, so on the following *Nkandu* the Frog

¹ Names of market days.

started at dawn for the market-place. He hopped and jumped over the ground and swam the rivers, and, reaching the market early, he hid himself and waited for the arrival of the Hawk.

In a little time the Hawk alighted on the market, and, putting down his satchel, he went about buying saucepans. When he had bought a few the Frog went and hid himself in one of them, and by and by the Hawk, returning to his town in sky-land, picked up his saucepans, and thus took the Frog with him.

The Hawk, on arriving home, put his saucepans in the corner of his house, and when all was quiet and dark the Frog came out of his hiding-place, and next morning met the Hawk in a casual way and asked him for his money. The Hawk was so surprised that at first he could not say a word, but at last he exclaimed: "Friend Frog, how did you get here, for you have neither feathers nor wings?"

"Never mind how I came," replied the Frog; "but I want my money."

The Hawk began to make excuses, and was so sorry because "he really had not the money just then."

But the Frog said: "Very well, I shall stay here in your house until you pay me."

Then the Hawk remembered that he had just

enough to pay him, because he wanted to get the Frog out of his house.¹

The Frog, on receiving his money, wondered how he was to return to earth. He decided to wait until next market-day, and then, creeping into the Hawk's satchel, was carried off to the market-place, and on arrival he hopped out of the satchel and took a walk round the market, and thus came face to face with the Hawk: "How did you get here?" asked the Hawk in surprise.

The Frog blinked at him, and said: "Well, I came by the road by which I travelled."

"Did you now?" said the Hawk; and then he went on to say: "I borrowed money of you because, having no feathers and no wings, I thought you would not worry me for payment, yet you have followed and bothered me, and I will never borrow of you again."

The Hawk ruffled his feathers and went, and as the Frog jumped off, he muttered: "I will never again lend to folk bigger than myself, for if you ask them for the money they are angry with you, and if you don't ask for it they think you silly and laugh at you."

¹ The creditor would live at the expense of the debtor, hence the Hawk's desire to get rid of the Frog.

XIX

How a Child saved his Mother's Life

A MAN, once upon a time, cleared a large piece of bush, and then sent his wife to plant it with cassava. When the cassava was ready to pull, the bush-pigs and other animals visited the farm and destroyed the roots, and it seemed as though the woman would have her trouble for nothing. The wife complained about it to her husband, and he went to dig a large pit in which to trap the wild animals that came stealing in their farm.

While the man was digging the hole an Imp came out of the forest near by and asked him what he was doing. Upon hearing he was digging a trap for animals, the Imp said: "Let me help you." The man, fearing the Imp would kill him if he refused, accepted his offer. Thereupon the Imp said: "Let us make a bargain. All the male animals that fall into the trap are yours, but all the female ones are mine." The man agreed to this, and they then finished the hole together, after which they returned to their places.

Next morning they went to look at the hole

and found one male pig in it, which the man took according to their agreement. Every morning they went and it was the same—male pigs, antelopes and buffaloes were in the trap, never any female ones, sometimes there were two males and sometimes there were five males. The man laughed, and said to the Imp: "You were foolish to make such a bargain, for did you not know that only male animals go about in search of food? You are very foolish."

The man took the animals to his town, and all the way home he was ridiculing the stupid Imp. The wife said: "Now we have plenty of meat, but no cassava bread to eat with it. Tomorrow I will go and dig up some roots in the farm with which to make some bread."

Early next morning the woman took her basket and her hoe, and went to the farm, leaving her husband at home to look after their little boy. When the woman had been gone some time the boy began to cry, so the man picked him up and followed his wife to the farm to give the child to her. As he drew near the farm he heard the Imp gleefully singing: "O my, O my, at last I have a female animal in the trap."

On reaching the trap the man asked the Imp why he was jumping, dancing and singing in that joyful fashion, and when he heard that it was

because there was one female animal in the trap, the man laughed at the Imp for making so much fuss over *one* animal; but looking into the pit, and seeing his wife there he began to cry, and contended that the Imp was cheating him as a woman was not an animal.

They became very angry in their discussion as to whether the woman was an animal or not, that at last the boy said: "Father, you agreed to the bargain that you were to have all the male animals, and he was to have all the female ones that fell into the trap; we have had plenty of animals out of the hole, but he has not had a single one. Let him take this one."

The Imp, admiringly, said: "Is this wise judge only a boy?" and with that he jumped into the trap to get out his prize, but no sooner had he done so than the boy called out: "Look, father, there is a male animal in the trap and it is yours."

On dropping down into the trap the Imp had become, according to his own statement, an animal, and consequently belonged to the man. The Imp, to save himself, had to give up all claim to the woman, and thus the child by his smartness saved his mother's life. Never again did the man enter into an agreement until he properly understood all about the conditions.

XX

How the Gazelle won his Wife

ONCE upon a time there was a Gazelle that went in search of a wife. While journeying he met a beautiful girl, and stopped, and said to her: "Miss So-and-so, have you any water?—if so, please give me a drink, for I am very thirsty."

The girl replied: "Yes, sir," and taking a calabash well ornamented with rows of brass nails she gave it to him full of water. He drank eagerly, and as he handed the calabash back, he said: "The water is as nice to drink as the girl is beautiful."

The Gazelle inquired of her, and finding she was not married, asked her: "Will you marry me?"

She answered: "I don't know, I must ask my mother."

So together they went to seek the mother's consent. When she heard all about the affair, she said: "If you want to marry my daughter you must first bring me the dried flesh of every animal and bird in the forest."

The Gazelle was at first disconcerted by such

426   **How the Gazelle won his Wife**

a difficult task, but said : " All right, I will do it," and went his way to think out a plan by which he could win his wife.

The Gazelle thought of first one way and then another, and at last he sought for and found a shell and filled it with various powerful " medicines," and thus, having made a strong fetish, he started for the forest.

He had not walked very far before a Dove came to him, and said : " Behold, there are ten animals down there; I fired at them, but did not kill a single one; if therefore you have a hunting-fetish, teach me how to use it."

" Yes, I have the kind of fetish you want," replied the Gazelle; " but before you can learn how to use it you must be killed, roasted and dried, and then I will restore you to life and teach you how to use the fetish."

" Very well," said the Dove, " I am ready to be roasted." So the Gazelle killed, roasted and dried the silly Dove and took the flesh to his store-room, as the first part of the dried meat he had to give to his future mother-in-law.

Soon after returning to the forest an Antelope came running up to him, and said : " We hear you have a strong fetish to help hunters to kill animals. Teach me how to use it, for I have had no success in hunting for a long time."

"Well, I have such a fetish," answered the Gazelle; "but before you can learn about it I must kill, roast and dry you. Then I bring you to life again and teach you the use of the fetish."

"Do with me whatever you like," said the Antelope, "so long as I get a fetish with which to kill plenty game."

The Gazelle drew his knife and told the Antelope to lie down on the ground.

"What are you going to do with that knife?" cried the Antelope.

"How can you be roasted and dried unless you are first killed?" quietly asked the Gazelle. So the Antelope stretched himself out, and was soon killed, dried and carried to the store.

"Well," ruminated the Gazelle, "I have found a way to win my wife, for these animals will believe any foolish thing so as to possess power to kill others. I must now try a big beast."

Again he went to the forest, but he had not gone very far into it before he met a Buffalo running. "Where are you going?" asked the Gazelle.

"I am off to look after my farm, for I have no luck in hunting," replied the Buffalo.

"I have a strong hunting-fetish," said the Gazelle; "but before you can use it I must cut

428   **How the Gazelle won his Wife**

out your heart, and roast and dry you; after that I call you back to life and teach you my fetish, which will give you plenty of hunting skill."

"All right," said the Buffalo; "but I am a big person and your knife will not enter my body." With that he fell on the ground, but directly the Gazelle had thrust his knife into the body the Buffalo cried out: "Please stop! do stop!" but the Gazelle said: "Just wait a moment only," and he pushed in the knife, and the Buffalo died. In a very short time the Buffalo's flesh was roasted, dried and carried to the store.

In this way the Gazelle caught and roasted the Lion, the Leopard, the Elephant and all the other animals and birds of the forest. By and by he carried all the dried meat to the mother of the beautiful girl, and said to her: "My respected mother-in-law, do not be angry because I have been a long time doing the task you set me. You know all about hunting, and that it is very slow and laborious work. Sometimes one shoots and does not kill; however, here is the meat for which you sent me." The old woman answered: "I thank you, and now you can take your wife and go your way."

XXI

The Gazelle is at last Punished

THE Leopard and the Gazelle made a large farm together, and planted maize, sugar-cane, cassava and various other things. To celebrate the finishing of their big farm they desired to make a feast. The Leopard wished to buy a goat, but the Gazelle said: "A goat is not big enough, let us buy a pig." A large pig was bought, and when it was cooked the Gazelle said: "Friend Leopard, let us go and bathe first in the river, and then return to eat our feast slowly and enjoy it." To this the Leopard agreed.

When they reached the river's bank each wanted the other to dive in first, but at last the Leopard jumped into the water and quickly came out again.

"You don't know how to dive," laughed the Gazelle.

"Very well," replied the Leopard, "you dive now and show me the way."

The Gazelle dived into the water, ran along the bottom of the river, came out near the town,

and went quickly and ate up all the boiled pig; and then, returning to the river, came puffing and blowing out of the water at the feet of his friend the Leopard. "There," said the Gazelle, "that is the way to dive."

Then they returned together to the town, but when they reached the Leopard's house they found the saucepan empty. The Leopard felt very much ashamed, because the food had been left in his house. He began to beat his wife for not looking properly after it. Then, turning to the Gazelle, he said: "Uncle Gazelle, I am very much ashamed because the cooked meat has been eaten in my house; let us now buy a goat."

But the Gazelle said: "You must pay for the goat yourself, for the pig was eaten in your house."

The Leopard took one of his own goats, and when it was cooked, he said: "This time let us eat first and bathe afterwards." But the Gazelle objected, and would bathe before eating, so the Leopard agreed, and they went together to the river. The Gazelle played the same trick on the Leopard, and this he did several times, and each time poor Mrs. Leopard received a thrashing, and the Leopard killed another goat.

By and by the Leopard bought a fetish called *nkondi*, and hid it in his house. When the

Gazelle arrived next time he found the door fastened, and on trying to open it the *nkondi* said: "Oh, you are the rascal who comes to eat my master's goat, you thief, get away quickly."

The Gazelle shouted: "Come out and I'll hit you."

The *nkondi* began to abuse him, saying: "Come into the house, if you can, you thin-legged one."

The Gazelle became so angry that he broke open the door, and hit the *nkondi* and his hand stuck; he hit him again, and the other hand stuck; he then kicked him and both his legs stuck fast, and he thereupon butted him with his head and that also stuck.

The Leopard waited a long time for the Gazelle, and then, thinking he was drowned, he returned to the town. On drawing near to the house he heard a great noise, and as he ran he shouted out: "Hold the thief tightly until I come."

What was his surprise to find the Gazelle held fast by the *nkondi*. "Oh, you are the thief, no wonder you wanted to bathe first!" said the Leopard, as he hit him.

"Unfasten me, Uncle Leopard," begged the Gazelle.

"No, I am going to eat first and undo you

432   **The Gazelle is at last Punished**

afterwards," laughed the Leopard. So he sat down and ate and chuckled, and chuckled and ate, until all the goat was finished; then he unstuck the Gazelle, and gave him a good sound thrashing for the tricks he had played on him, and let him go covered with aches, pains and bruises.

XXII

The Leopard pays Homage to the Goat

THE natives say that there was a time when the Leopard paid homage to the Goat because of his beard and horns, but he discovered the Goat's weakness in the following manner—

One day, while the Leopard was cutting a palm-tree for wine, a Billy-goat arrived at the wine-booth and bleated loudly: "Be—e, Leopard!"

The Leopard listened, and said, "What great chief is that calling me?"

"Be—e, Leopard," again cried the Goat.

"Yes, sir," answered the Leopard, and descending the palm-tree he went softly and meekly to his wine-booth and found a person there with a long beard and large horns.

"Pour me out some wine," said the Goat. This the Leopard did at once. Pouring the wine into a glass, he knelt and offered it to the Goat, who drank it off glass after glass as the Leopard crouched in a humble position before him. This happened several days running—the Goat order-

ing the palm-wine and the Leopard offering it on his knees as to a great chief.

One day, while the Leopard was paying homage in this way to the Goat, a Gazelle arrived and stared in surprise at what he saw, and after the Goat had gone, he said to the Leopard: "Uncle Leopard, do you know who that is?"

"No," replied the Leopard; "I do not know in the least who it is, but he has a long beard and big horns."

"Oh! oh!" laughed the Gazelle; "that is foolish. Do you not see that you are paying homage to empty size? He has no strong teeth for biting hard things and for fighting. If you do not believe me, try him to-morrow."

Next day the Goat came as usual, and demanded his palm-wine. He found the Leopard and the Gazelle already there in the booth. The Gazelle took from his bag a kola nut, and, breaking it, he gave one section to the Goat, another to the Leopard, and took one himself. The Leopard crunched his section at once with his powerful teeth, and the Gazelle bit his part to pieces, but the poor Goat, having no strong teeth, turned his section of the nut over and over in his mouth, first one side and then the other.

The Gazelle made a sign with his lips to the Leopard, as much as to say: "Do you see, he

has no teeth. I told you so." The Leopard thereupon jumped on the Goat and killed him without a struggle, and from that time the Leopard has never again been afraid of the Goat's long beard and big horns. A beard and horns do not make a strong animal, but a powerful mouth is necessary. Pomposity without real authority will not be respected for very long.

XXIII

Why the Owls and the Fowls never speak to each other

A FOWL and an Owl became friends, but they built their houses at some distance from each other. One day the Owl heard that his friend was very sick, so he gathered some money together and went to pay a visit to the Fowl. When he arrived he inquired after the health of his friend, and finding he was still very ill he sent for a "medicine man," and in due time his friend the Fowl recovered, and the Owl returned to his town.

By and by the Owl fell ill with a very bad illness, and the news reached the Fowl that his friend was on the point of death. He gathered some money and went to visit his friend and give him the best advice about getting better. He said to the wives of the Owl: "Get ready some very hot water, and pound up some red peppers."

The wives did as they were told, and then the Fowl said to the Owl: "Take off your clothes and get into the saucepan."

“Won’t it burn me?” asked the Owl.

“No, my friend, it will not hurt you,” deceptively replied the Fowl.

So he did as his friend bade him, and put himself carefully into the saucepan of hot water. In a short time the Fowl said to the Owl’s wives: “Take him out, and pluck his feathers, rub him well with the red pepper, and put him on a line to dry, and be sure and not take him down until he is thoroughly dry.” Leaving these directions with them, the Fowl went home. After he had left, the Owl died, and the family was so angry at the outrage the Fowl had committed that they desired to punish him.

The family sent word to the Fowl that on a certain day the funeral would take place, and they invited him to attend it. On the appointed day the Fowl went with his band and his followers, who were the Leopard, the Lion, the Dog and the Shrew-mole.

Now the Owl’s family had collected some strong followers who were called the Fox, the Viper, the Boa, the Elephant, the Antelope, and the Palm-rat, all of whom were friends of the Owl. By and by they heard the Fowl’s band playing “The tail of the Owl is very powerful.” This insult to his dead friend made the Owl’s family very angry, so they arranged their followers

in ambush, and told them to be sure and "catch that rascal the Fowl."

As the Fowl's party drew near to the town, out came the Boa from his hiding-place to catch the Fowl, but the Shrew-mole squeaked, and the Boa split all down one side and had to retreat; then came the Fox, but the Dog fought him and made him run away; then came the Elephant, but the Lion bit his trunk, and he fled; and the Antelope caught sight of the Leopard's marks and bolted. The Fowl at last arrived in the town, and played at the funeral of the Owl "The tail of the Owl is very powerful," and after ridiculing his late friend in this manner, he returned home with his band and followers. The Owls never speak now to the Fowls.

XXIV

How the Elephant punished the Leopard

THE Elephant and the Leopard lived in the same town and married their wives about the same time. By and by the Leopard's wife gave birth to two children, and the Elephant's wife gave birth to one. Some time after this happened the Elephant had to go on a trading journey into a distant country, so he left his son in the care of the Leopard.

One day the Leopard, his sons, and the young Elephant all went hunting in the big bush. The Leopard showed his sons the animals' tracks, taught them where to stand and what to do; but as for the Elephant's son he took no notice of him, did not instruct him, and left him to do what he could.

In a little time an antelope started up, and the Leopard's first son fired and missed, and the second son fired and also missed. Then the antelope ran by where the young Elephant happened to be, and he shot it. Thereupon the Leopard and his sons ran up and claimed the antelope as theirs, and as the Elephant had no one to take

440   **The Elephant punishes the Leopard**

his side he had to give way. This occurred three times, and then the young Elephant would not hunt with them any more.

After some months the old Elephant returned from his long trading expedition, and his son told him all that had happened to him, and how he had been cheated by his guardian. When the Elephant heard it he was very angry, and said : "All right, I will punish the Leopard for defrauding you." They then dug a large hole in their house, put some twigs and branches over it, and spread a mat over the whole. Then they put the saucepans on the fire, and the Elephant bought some palm-wine and asked the Leopard to come and drink with him, which invitation he at once accepted.

When the Leopard arrived they told him to sit on the mat, and as he sat down the mat gave way under him, and he fell into the deep hole underneath. The Elephant said : "I left my son with you, and instead of taking care of him you cheated him every time he went hunting with you," and he followed his words by pouring the boiling water over the Leopard. Thus died the Leopard for being false to his trust.

XXV

How the Leopard tried to deceive the Gazelle

ONCE the Leopard and the Gazelle had a very bad quarrel, and ever since then the Leopard has been trying to catch and kill the Gazelle, but has failed in every attempt.

The Leopard, having tried many other ways of entrapping the Gazelle, at last pretended to be sick. He rubbed some powdered ironstone on his face and instructed his wives to send messengers for the Palm-rat, the Mongoose, and all the other animals, and also for the Gazelle. When they were all gathered except the Gazelle they went in one by one to see the Leopard, and he killed them; but he thought that he had all the trouble for nothing as the Gazelle had not arrived, so he asked his wives what they were to do now to catch the Gazelle. They advised him to send for a "medicine man," and then the Gazelle would be sure to think he was really ill. While they were searching for a "medicine man" the Gazelle arrived, but he would not enter the house.

442   **The Leopard tries to Deceive**

The "medicine man" arrived with his charms,
and while he made "medicine" he sang—

"O Gazelle, come where the sick one is,
It is your own uncle who is ill."

When the Gazelle heard this he answered by a
song—

"O uncle, come out of the house,
Come out into the daylight now."

They tried by every means to persuade the Gazelle to enter the house, but he remained firm, and refused to listen to all their nice talk, and at last the Leopard, losing all patience, jumped up and rushed out of the house; but the Gazelle, noticing his anger, sprang away into the forest and escaped; but as for all the other silly ones who had been deceived by the Leopard, they were eaten by him.

The invitations and persuasions of enemies are to be received with caution.

XXVI

The Story of two Young Women

ONCE there were two girls whose uncle told them : " You are now old enough to marry, so you may look out for two young men." Their hearts were glad when they received this permission, and very soon they found two lovers. The elder became engaged to a poor man, and the younger to a rich one.

One day the elder girl paid a visit to her betrothed, and as he was poor he could only give her a common fish to eat and a mat to lie on for a bed ; but when the younger went to see her rich lover he killed a goat for her supper, gave her a fine bed spread with blankets, and in the morning killed a pig for her breakfast ; and when she was leaving to return to her home he gave her a shawl, a fine piece of blue and white cloth, a necklace of beads, and a looking-glass.

The two sisters happened to meet at the cross-roads, and they asked each other what presents they had received, and when the younger girl saw the poor gift received by the other, she showed her presents with much vanity, and laughed at her

sister for having such a poor lover. This occurred every time they visited their young men—the younger sister laughed to scorn the poverty of the elder sister's suitor.

After due time the day of their marriage arrived, and the rich man told all his pedigree, gave a great, fat pig for the feast, and sent his bride a piece of velvet, a piece of white cloth, and a piece of satin; but the poor man could only send some fowls for the feast and give his bride one piece of ordinary cloth. After the marriage festivities were over the new wives went to live in the houses of their husbands.

Before many days had passed the younger bride committed a small fault, and her husband in his anger cut off her ears. She cried out for help, but her family could not help her, as they had consented to the marriage. In a week he was angry about some other small matter, and he cut off her nose, and the next time she vexed him with some small mistake he cut off her head. Thus she did not live long to enjoy her fine things. As for the poor husband, he said to his wife: "It is not until death comes to me that we shall separate." Riches do not always bring with them happiness and contentment.

XXVII

Why the Chameleon cut off his own Head

ONE day the Frog, on going to work in her farm, left her two children in the house with plenty of food to eat. She had not been gone very long when a Chameleon arrived, and took possession of the house and the children. She dressed them with knives and bells, and made them dance. The Frog, returning from her work, found the Chameleon in her house, and when she attempted to enter, the Chameleon threatened to tread her into a pulp. The Frog went crying to the Elephant, and he, on hearing her story, promised to get the Chameleon out of the house with his large trunk, but when he went to the door of the house, the Chameleon snarled at him, and he turned and fled.

The Frog then went to the Leopard and told him of her trouble, and he said: "Don't worry, I will quickly have her out of the house." But no sooner did he show himself at the door than the Chameleon snarled at him, and he ran away. Thus it was with all the animals. They all

boasted of what they would do, but were all afraid to do it.

As the Frog went crying she met a flock of Sparrows, and said to them: "Friend Sparrows, go and drive the Chameleon out of my house." The Sparrows went in front of the Frog's house, dried their drums at the fire, and as they began to dance they chanted a chorus: "Sparrows, when you dance, don't dance with your heads on." Some of the Sparrows then went forward, and having put their heads under their wings, they began to dance. The Chameleon, looking out of the door, saw this wonderful sight, and seeing the Sparrows dancing very nicely without any heads, she thought they had cut them off, and as she was a great dancer,¹ and wanted to imitate the Sparrows in their marvellous dance, she cut off her own head, and fell dead. The Frog thanked the Sparrows for their help, and went into the house to nurse her children. What the big animals could not do with all their strength the Sparrows did by their cleverness.

¹ The natives regard the Chameleon as a great dancer, because while standing still it has a peculiar movement, something like a native dancing.

XXVIII

Why the Congo Robin has a Red Breast

“**K**INSIDIKITI” is a small bird with red round its mouth and red spots on its breast. The female has no red spots on the breast, and the following is the legend accounting for the difference—

One day the Robin and his wife found that they had no red-camwood powder ¹ with which to beautify themselves, so the husband made preparations for a journey to Stanley Pool to buy some redwood from those who brought it from the Upper Congo towns to sell at the Pool markets.

He was a long time on the road, but at last reached the place only to find that all the redwood for making the powder had been sold to others, who were before him. He tried one trader after another with no success, for all had sold out, but

¹ The powder is made by grinding two pieces of the camwood together. The red paste resulting from the friction is dried, pounded and put into a cloth, and after a person has bathed, and rubbed himself (or herself) with oil the cloth is dabbed on the body, and the fine dust comes out and over the body. The camwood powder is greatly valued as a cosmetic.

448   **Why Robin has a Red Breast**

one said : "I have none to sell, but I can give you a small piece, enough for yourself."

He gave him a small piece, and for safety the Robin put it in his throat, as he wanted to take it home to his wife. As he travelled homeward the redwood melted in his mouth and throat, and came out round his beak and through his chest to his feathers, and ever since then he has had a red mouth and breast.

XXIX

The Leopard tries to steal the Gazelle's Wife

THE Leopard had many wives, but his friend the Gazelle had only one, and the Leopard desired to procure that one, and very often said to himself : "I must kill the Gazelle and take his wife for myself." So he sent a messenger to call the Gazelle, but he was too wise to go, and sent an excuse, saying : "You tell the Leopard that I am going to market, and cannot visit him now."

In a very short time another messenger arrived and said : "Go to the Leopard, for he is dead."

"Oh! oh! that is very strange," replied the Gazelle, "that you who are a mourner should be travelling about, but perhaps you are going to buy pigs for the funeral feast?"

Before he had finished speaking another messenger came and said : "Gazelle, your uncle the Leopard is dead, go and wrap the cloth round his body."

"Yes," answered the Gazelle, "I will come and bind up the body, but first I will go and buy some pigs for the funeral festivities."

When the Leopard heard these answers he rushed after the Gazelle that he might kill him, but on turning a corner in the road the Leopard met a beautiful girl; but he did not know that it was the Gazelle who had changed himself into that form. Of her the Leopard inquired: "Did you see a Gazelle pass this way?"

"Yes, my lord Leopard, I did," she replied.

The Leopard then said to her: "Would you like to marry me?"

"Yes," she said, "I would like to marry you, but you have such sharp teeth and claws."

"Very well," replied the Leopard, "cut them all off."

So she at once cut off all his claws, and pulled out his teeth.

"Will you marry me now?" asked the Leopard.

"I would like to," repeated the girl, "but for the marks on your chest and neck."

"Oh, all right," he said; "cut them all out."

And she cut them away, spot after spot, and mark after mark, and the Leopard died. The Gazelle changed back to his proper form, and as he went off he said: "The Leopard tried to rob me of my one wife, but he has lost his life through his covetousness."

XXX

The Gazelle kills the Flies and Mosquitoes, and outwits the Leopard

THE Leopard, once upon a time, went cutting the palm-tree for wine, and started a palm-wine booth in a place infested with mosquitoes and biting flies of various kinds; and he made a law that any one who brushed the flies and mosquitoes off their bodies while in his booth should at once be killed.

The Antelope called at the booth one day and asked for a drink of palm-wine; but no sooner had he begun to drink it than the mosquitoes and flies so swarmed round him and irritated him with their bites, that in brushing them off he killed many of them. When the Leopard saw that, he became very angry, and said: "I made a law that whoever came to drink in my booth should not brush the flies and mosquitoes away. You have broken my law, and killed many of my insects, so now you must die," and he jumped on the Antelope and killed him. In this way the Leopard killed many of the animals.

One morning the Gazelle said to himself: "I

must visit my Uncle Leopard, and ask him for a drink of his palm-wine." So he started for the booth, and on his arrival the Leopard greeted him, saying: "How do you do, Uncle Gazelle?"

"I am quite well," replied the Gazelle.

"Where are you going?" asked the Leopard.

"Oh, I came to have a drink of your palm-wine," said the Gazelle.

They at once sat down and began to drink together, but very soon the flies and mosquitoes came about the Gazelle and sorely worried him; but the Gazelle remembered the Leopard's law, and wondered how he could drive the flies away and not break the law of the booth. After thinking a little while, he told the Leopard about a fight that had taken place a few days before. He said: "The other day we went to fight, and we were all wounded, some in the head," and he rubbed his hands over his head and face, "some in the arms," and he brushed his hands down his arms, "some in the legs," and he passed his hands down his legs, and so over the whole of his body until he had either driven the flies and mosquitoes away, or had killed them; but he said, as he slapped his sides: "not one of us was killed."

In a short time he was again covered with mosquitoes and flies, and again he told the Leopard of the great fight, and as he did so he brushed off

the irritating flies. The Leopard glared at him, and as he sprang on him he cried in rage : " You are breaking my law and killing my insects."

But as the Gazelle darted away he shouted : " Oh no, I was only telling you where the people were wounded."

XXXI

The Leopard is Badly Tricked by the Gazelle, Rat and Frog

THE Leopard owned a fine plum-tree,¹ and the Gazelle, while out walking one day, discovered it, and, noticing the fruit was ripe, he threw up a rope which caught on one of the main branches, and was soon among the plums. He put some in a bag, and as he turned to descend he saw a Squirrel and her nest on one of the forks of the tree. The Squirrel observed the Gazelle, and as she was the Leopard's watchman she told the Leopard all about the theft.

As the Gazelle was returning home he saw a Palm-rat weaving, and, throwing a plum at him, it broke the web, whereupon the Palm-rat turned angrily on the Gazelle; but on receiving some plums and tasting them his anger passed away, and he asked where he could procure some more. The Gazelle told him to make a bag without any bottom to it, and in the morning he was to come directly he heard his whistle.

¹ The tree in the story is the nsafu (*canuniensis*) the fruit of which is date shape, but the tree is like a plum in shape, etc.

The next morning, directly he heard the Gazelle's whistle, the Palm-rat picked up his bottomless bag and joined the Gazelle. After a short walk they reached the plum-tree, and the Gazelle said: "Shut your eyes while I climb." The Palm-rat obeyed the order, and the Gazelle went to his rope and climbed the tree.

The Palm-rat asked: "How am I to climb the tree?"

"Oh, knock your head against the tree, and you will soon be up," replied the Gazelle.

So the Palm-rat put his claws into the tree and knocked his head against it (that is why he has a swollen head), and at last reached the branches.

The Gazelle told him to pull all the green plums, which he stupidly did, and when he put them in his bag they fell through to the ground. When the Gazelle had plucked all the ripe plums he wanted, he said to the Palm-rat: "Look and see if the Squirrel is on that fork of the tree."

The Palm-rat saw the Squirrel, and while he was looking the Gazelle threw a plum at her, and she cried out: "Oh, Leopard, come quickly, the Gazelle is pulling all your plums!"

When the Leopard heard this he came running to the tree, and called out: "Come down, and I'll cure you of your sickness."

"Thank you," replied the Gazelle; "my mother has every kind of medicine in her house."

"Come down," shouted the Leopard, "and I'll cure you of the shakes."

"My mother has a remedy for that complaint," responded the Gazelle, but he continued, "I'll come down, and when you hear a thud you will know I have alighted on the ground, but when you hear a patter you will know it is my bag."

The Gazelle threw his bag, and it fell with a thud, and the Leopard, thinking it was the Gazelle, rushed out to find only the bag, while the Gazelle jumped down the other side and got away.

The Palm-rat tried to follow the tricky example of the Gazelle, but not being clever threw himself down with a thud, and was caught and punished by the Leopard. The Gazelle played off this trick on several other animals, who were caught one by one by the Leopard and punished for stealing his plums.

One day the Gazelle took the Nkumbi¹ with him to rob the plum-tree. On reaching it he told the Nkumbi to shut his eyes while he climbed the tree, but the Nkumbi only pretended to do so, and, seeing the means by which the Gazelle

¹ A very large and clever rat.

mounted the tree, he followed in the same way by the hanging rope.

The Gazelle tied up the bottom of his bag, the Nkumbi did the same; the Gazelle plucked the ripe plums, so did the Nkumbi. The 'cuteness of the Nkumbi was equal to the smartness of the Gazelle.

Says the Gazelle: "Let us throw some plums into that nest." They did so, and roused the Squirrel, who cried out to the Leopard. The Leopard came quickly. "Come down here, and I'll teach you," he shouted.

"Oh no," said the Gazelle, "my mother is able to teach me; but if you hear a thud, you will know it is I, and if a patter, it is my bag."

Again the Gazelle escaped by this ruse, leaving the Nkumbi in the plum-tree. The Nkumbi, however, deceived the Leopard by the same trick, and got safely out of the tree to the ground; but the Leopard chased him to the mouth of his hole, and then began to dig the Nkumbi out with his claws, but was not able to do so; and seeing a Frog he said: "You are very strong, are you not?"

"Oh yes," replied the Frog; "I am a very strong person."

"Very well," said the Leopard; "just watch this hole, and, whatever you do, you must not

458   **The Leopard is Badly Tricked**

let the Nkumbi get out while I go home for a hoe to dig him out of his run."

The Leopard went off, and the Frog sat down on his haunches to watch the hole. By and by the Nkumbi came to the mouth of the hole eating some peanuts. "Uncle Nkumbi," said the Frog, "give me some of what you are eating."

"Open your eyes wide, and come close," replied the Nkumbi, and at once he changed the peanuts in his mouth for some pepper, and when the Frog came near enough, he blew the chewed pepper right into his eyes. The Frog fell over with the pain, and then ran straight to a stream to wash the pepper-juice out of his eyes.

The Nkumbi took the opportunity to escape from his hole into the forest. When the Frog had washed the pepper out of his eyes he returned to watch the empty hole, and shortly after the Leopard arrived with the hoe, and asked the Frog: "Is he still in there?"

"Yes," answered the Frog, "but I had a lot of trouble with him, and, being very strong, I was able to put him back into the hole."

The Leopard began to dig the hole, and the Frog drew off a little way on the side nearest the stream. "Here is an opening," said the Frog.

"Stop it up," growled the Leopard.

The Frog shifted nearer the water. "Here is another outlet," said the Frog.

"Stop that up also," replied the Leopard.

The Frog jumped nearer still to the stream. "Oh, here is another hole," he said, and with that he sprang flop into the water, and cried out: "I watched the hole, but the Nkumbi blew some pepper into my eyes, and while I was washing it out of them he escaped."

When the Leopard heard that he was so angry that he tried to block up the stream so as to catch the Frog, but the Frog was too quick for him, and as he escaped down-stream he cried out: "Oh, he threw pepper into my eyes, and ran off into the forest."

The big Leopard was fooled all round by the little animals—the Gazelle, Nkumbi, and Frog. From that day the Frog's eyes have bulged out, and he is always trying to wash the pepper out of them in the streams and rivulets.

XXXII

Why the Small-ants live in the Houses

THERE are many species of ants in Congo, but there are two kinds—the Small-ant and the Driver-ant—that have most to do with the people; the former are to be found in the houses, and it is difficult to keep food free of them, and the latter are the scavengers that scour the country in search of carrion; their bite is fierce and tenacious, and is dreaded by all who come into contact with them. The characteristics of the two species of ants are turned to account in the story.

One day the Driver-ants and the Small-ants were assembled together, and the former said: “We will govern the country as chiefs.” But the Small-ants objected to this arrangement, and asserted that they were quite able to rule the land. The Driver-ants laughed at them for having no strength, and while they were discussing the matter an Elder came along and inquired into the matter, and on being told the whole affair, he said: “You Driver-ants, and you Small-ants, go,

and the first who brings a piece of the skin of a man shall rule over the country."

The Driver-ants went off and waited at a cross-road, and directly they saw a person coming they crowded out and bit his legs. When the man felt the bites he ran off a little way and pulled the Driver-ants off his legs and killed them, and consequently they were not able to procure a piece of skin, although many died in the attempt.

The Small-ants went into a person's house and sat there quietly waiting; and by and by a man arrived who, while returning from his work, had hit his foot against a stone and raised the skin. He took a knife from the wall and sat down and cut off the loose skin, which he threw away. The watching Ants soon found the piece of skin, and carried it to the place where they had held the discussion with the Driver-ants, and gave it to the Elder as a proof of their wisdom and strength. The Elder gave the decision in their favour, and told them that they were the rulers of the land. This is the reason why the Small-ants live in houses, while the Driver-ants have to live in the bush.

XXXIII

The Son who tried to outwit his Father

A SON said to his father one day: "I will hide, and you will not be able to find me." The father replied: "Hide wherever you like," and then he went into his house to rest.

The son saw a three-kernel peanut, and changed himself into one of the kernels; a fowl coming along picked up the peanut and swallowed it; and a wild bush-cat caught and ate the fowl; and a dog met, chased, and ate the bush-cat. After a little time the dog was swallowed by a python, that, having eaten its meal, went to the river and was snared in a fish-trap.

The father searched for his son, and, not seeing him, went to look at his fish-trap. On pulling it to the riverside he found a large python in it. He opened it and saw a dog inside, in which he found a bush-cat, and on opening that he discovered a fowl, from which he took the peanut, and breaking its shell he there revealed his son. The son was so dumbfounded that he never tried again to outwit his father.

INDEX

(TO PART I)

A

ALPHABET, native learning the, 254
 Attempts by natives to rid themselves of sickness and death, 283, 284
 Attendants on the King, 145

B

Bakula takes a fancy to me, 25; his character, 25; his charms, 35; tells good stories, 39; questions the visitors, 59; strikes at the white man, 65; goes with Satu on a visit, 74; is cut in a drunken row, 99; wound dressed by white teacher, 100; belauds the chief, 105; shakes hands with the teacher, 107; tells his name to his white friend, 111; is astonished at the teaching, 112; accompanies an embassy, 131; goes to see the white man, 133; sees the King of Congo, 137; learns about the King's Court, 145; sees the station at work, 148; afraid to go into school, 152; sees a witch-doctor performing, 158; attends the white teacher during the Sunday work, 162;

exposure of a witch-doctor, 166; returns to his town, 171; begins to lose faith in fetishes, 197; charged with stealing, 241; repudiates charms and "medicine men," 241; cloth found in his house, 243; refuses to bribe the nganga, 246; is burnt by the boiling oil, 248; runs away to mission station, 250; learns the alphabet, 254; turned out of a town, 258; prays for the people, 259; convicted of sin, 260; joins the Church, 264; returns to his town, 265; starts a school, 268; school-house destroyed, 272; accused of witchcraft, 289; is guarded through the night, 290; takes the ordeal, 291; murdered, 291; is buried by Tumbu, 292
 Baobab bark juice rubbed on by witch-doctor, 248
 Baptismal service, 331
 Bartering for native produce, 235
 Betrothal bonds, releasing from, 179; customs connected with, 186
 Brass rod, made in factory, 1; shipped to Congo, 2; travels up river, 6; sold for rubber

and ivory, 12; travels overland, 13; Bakula takes a fancy to it, 25; Tumbu takes it from Bakula's corpse, 293; Tumbu buries it, 294; Mikula discovers and wears it, 295
 Burial, christian, 201
 Bush-burning, 194; guarding a town before the bush is burnt, 195; laws relating to, 203; Dimbula breaks the law, 203

C

Candidates for membership, 319, 321, 329
 Charms, sacrifices to, 26, 36, 70; various purposes of, 35
 Chief's house, 22;
 Chief dies, 23; orgy at funeral of, 24; bearers struggle with corpse, 31; buried at sunset, 31; barbarity of a, 163; way of dealing with a, 273
 Christianity a blessing to women, 310
 Christmas festival, 327
 Church accounts, 334, 336; membership, not easily admitted to, 319, 321, 329; roll, 318, 334, 336
 Collections at services, 299, 309, 312, 316
 Communion services, 298, 300, 338
 Comparisons—old life and new, 297, 301, 310, 316, 317
 Congo River, its width, 7; its current, 7, 11; fishing in the, 8
 Conservatism of the Congo people, 267
 Conundrums, various, 9, 124, 125
 Corpse, fighting for, 218

D

Dance called Sala, 103
 Dangers of the road, 229, 231, 317
 Deacons, election of, 332; native, 298, 332, 334, 339
 Death, natives attempt to free themselves of, 283, 284
 Deficit wiped out, 334
 Devil's Cauldron, 11
 Diagnosing by native "doctor," 275
 Dimbula breaks the rules about bush-burning, 203; insults Satu, 204; is boastful, 205; accepts the bullet, 213; sues for peace, 220; pays indemnity, 221
 Drums, electrical effect of, 103
 Drunken bouts, 30, 99

F

Fighting, mode of, 217
 Fines imposed are shared, 226
 Forest town of spirits, 31, 32
 Funeral orgy, 30

G

Games, native, "Antelope" game, 76; with the drum Sala, 103; make-believe games, 114; "Biti" and needle, 115; with canna seeds, 116; hoop, 118; mbele (or knife), 119; various, 121
 Generosity of native Christians, 316, 334, 336
 Gifts at a funeral, 27
 Gin and rum, 13
 Goat! Goat! or redeeming a slave, 191

- Governing, 223; making a new law, 224
- Greetings, 232

H

- Harvest home! 338
- Harvest thanksgiving, 309, 312
- Houses, 34
- Hunters take blood of Antelope to the great hunter, 207
- Hunting, 194; charm for, 197; visit to great hunter, 198

I

- Interpreter to Trader, 235

J

- Journey begins, my overland, 12

K

- King of Congo murders his mother, 106
- King of Congo, 131; calls the embassy, 134; his courtyard, 135; his palace, 136; is pleased with the presents, 137; his name, 137; size of, 138; goes to dinner with the white man, 139; eats a large dinner, 141; sees magic lantern, 143; his Majesty's Court, 145; told to go to St. Catherine, 167
- Kroo boys, their work on steamer, 3; their curious names, 4; give white men names, 4, 7; boy tries to steal me, 5; carries me out of the store, 5

H H

L

- Law, making a new, 224; peculiarity of native laws, 225; fines imposed for breaking a law are shared, 226
- Leopard, ceremony after killing a, 176
- Life, petty and mean native, 58

M

- Markets, 227, risks of attending, 229
- Marriage, Christian, 307; releasing a niece from, 179; sham struggle at, 189; money, paying, 182, 187; feast at, 189; promises, 189
- Martyrs for the cause, 305, 306
- Mavakala, accused of witchcraft, 52; denies his guilt, 52; reason of the false charge, 53; takes the ordeal, 55; vomits it, 56; other tests forced on him, 56; is murdered, 57; carcass left on hill-top, 57
- "Medicine man," makes fetish for white man, 13; visited by Satu, 20; makes a charm for Satu, 21; fails to cure Satu's brother, 22; searches for the witch, 49; mode of procedure, 51; accuses Mavakala of witchcraft, 52; makes a luck fetish, 69; rubs out evil spirits, 158; exposure of, 166; makes a hunting charm, 197; makes a war fetish and charms, 214; performs peace rites, 221; makes trading charm, 251; asks Bakula for a

- bribe, 247 ; is fooled by school-boys, 263 ; models of diagnosing, 275 ; various kinds of, 274, 277, 280, 281
- Mikula finds the brass rod, 275 ; takes services, 297 ; conducts a funeral, 201 ; his marriage, 307 ; receives the gifts, 309 ; talks to an inquirer, 320.
- Mission station, working of, 148 ; buying food, 149 ; best way of bartering for goods, 150 ; school, 151 ; repairing, 153 ; boys' work in the garden, 154 ; rules on a, 155 ; talk with the boys, 156 ; Saturday's work, 157 ; Sunday's work—Sunday school, 159 ; service, 161 ; visit to a town, 162 ; talk with the King, 164 ; employments, 257
- Missionary meeting, native, 335
- Missionary, their talk about, 17 ; is coming, 60 ; driven from the town, 66 ; is defended by Tonzeka, 93-97 ; dresses the wounds, 100 ; converses with Satu and his followers, 107-110 ; native name for, 90 ; visits Bakula, 270
- Mother of Bakula falls ill, 274

N

- Names given to Kroo boys, 4 ; white men, 4 ; missionaries, 90
- Ndoki, an evil bewitching spirit, 22, 23, 278, 281, 282, 283
- Nkwiya, spirit that can leave a person and travel without the body, 232, 281

O

- Omens, kicking the foot, 19, 85 ; snake on the road, 74 ; cutting ordeal bark, 55
- Out-station work, 296 ; Sunday at an, 297 ; Communion at an, 298

P

- Pawn, redeeming a, 178
- Peace, ceremony of making, 220
- Pictures, native learns to look at, 255
- Plaited-Beard warns my companions against white men, 16 ; angers the people against the coming white man, 60 ; abuses a visitor, 62 ; accompanies Satu, 74 ; kicks his foot and returns to his town, 85 ; is sent on an embassy, 131 ; refuses to meet the white man, 172 ; is not successful in hunting, 208 ; accuses Bakula, 208 ; reinvigorates his charm, 210 ; is made Nenkondo, 224 ; his crockery is broken, 239 ; charges Bakula with stealing, 241 ; submits to the ordeal, 247 ; guards Bakula during the night, 290
- Prohibition of luck-giver, 71
- Proverbs, 33, 39
- Pudding, way to eat, 38

R

- Redeeming a pawn, 178 ; a slave, 191
- Riddles, various, 9, 124, 125

Ridge-pole, taking of chiefs,
219

Road, dangers of the, 229, 231,
316

Rules of the road, 234

S

Sacrifices to charms, 26, 36, 70

St. Catherine fails to help the
King, 167

Satu knocks his toes, 19; bad
omen, 20; visits "medicine
man," 20; arrives just in time
to see his dying brother, 22;
arranges burial of his brother,
23; receives the mourners,
26, and their gifts, 27; stops
a serious quarrel, 63; orders
a luck fetish, 69; goes to visit
a chief, 73; his toilet and
dress, 86; visits the white
man, 106; a long talk, 107-
110; afraid of witchcraft, 111;
a title falls to him, 131; sends
embassy to King, 131; re-
ceives his title, 173; redeems
his brother, 178; releases his
niece from a hateful marriage,
179; his quarrel with Dim-
bula, 203; demands an apo-
logy, 205; goes to war, 212;
accused of bewitching a slave,
219; helps Bakula, 242

Selfishness, heathen, 317

Sickness, attempt to clear coun-
try of, 283, 284

Smoking a chief, 273

Superstitions about white men:
buying bodies, 16; get cloth
from the sea, 17; wickedness
of white teachers, 17, 18; a
luck-fowl dies, 271

T

Teachers, need for native, 300;
teaching, 303

Title falls to Satu, 131; cere-
mony of giving the, 174

Titles of King's attendants, 145

Toilet before meals, 28; before
entering a town, 86

Tolls for bridges, 234

Tonzeka receives Satu, 87;
gives him good entertainment,
90; how to settle a palaver,
91; defends the white
teacher, 93-97; is disturbed
by the teaching, 95; takes
Satu to the white teacher,
106

Trade goods taken for rubber,
ivory, etc., 13

Trading, 230; fetish for helping,
231; arrival of traders, 234

Treatment of native chief, 273

Tumbu sold for food, 43; tells
a story, 43; wounded, 217;
witnesses for Bakula, 244;
tries to comfort Bakula, 249;
buries Bakula, 292; takes me
from his friend's body, 293

V

Visitors arrive, 59; abused by
Plaited-Beard, 62

W

War fetish is made, 214

Wardrobes, variegated, 87

Welcomed to the station, 303,
311

White men, native talk about,
13

- White man's fetish, 13 ;
 puts weight under scale, 14 ;
 buys banana for rubber, 14 ;
 cheats in paying out beads,
 14 ; is rubbed with cow-itch,
 15 ; wants to steal ivory
 trumpets but is shaved, 32 ;
 accused of being dirty, 62 ;
 why they live under the sea,
 108 ; will steal our country,
 172
- White woman take services,
 314
- Witch-doctors, names of—
 Kimbaji-mbaji=to-morrow, 21
 Ngang'a Ngombo = witch-
 finder, 50, 288
 Ngol'a nkasa=giver of the
 ordeal, 55 ;
 ngang'a zumbi = luck-giver,
 69 ;
 ngang'a nkongo=giver of
 hunting skill, 194, 210
- Kimpovela, one who speaks
 on behalf of others, 198
 prayer of, 199, 207
 Nganga of war, 214
 Nganga of peace, 221
 Ngang'a mpungu=giver of
 trading and general good
 luck, 231
 Nganga who gives oil ordeal,
 246
 Nganga to destroy evil spirit,
 363
 Nganga a wuka = healer,
 274
 Nganga a moko, 277
 Nganga with traps, 280
 Nganga a bitodi who spoke to
 spirits, 281
 Nganga various, 284
- Women regarded as inferior,
 30, 38 ; condition bettered
 by Christianity, 310 ; white
 woman takes services, 314

JAMES CHALMERS

His Autobiography and Letters.

By the late RICHARD LOVETT, M.A.,
Author of "James Gilmour of Mongolia," etc.

Seventh Impression. With 2 Maps and 8 Portrait Illustrations, 511 pages. Large crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 3s. 6d. In padded paste grain, round corners, gilt edges, 6s. 6d. net.

"Altogether no brighter or more skilful narrative of missionary life—from the subjective as well as from the objective point of view—has ever been published than this."—*The Spectator*.

"It is the best missionary biography that has appeared during the last twenty years. It is a book that will live and take rank as a missionary classic. It is full of thrills, tremulous with pathos, glowing in its passion, and sublime in its tragic ending. A book to be read and re-read when the enthusiasm of humanity wanes, and we are tempted to let fireside heroics take the place of action."—*The Daily News*.

GRIFFITH JOHN

The Story of Fifty Years in China.

By R. WARDLAW THOMPSON, D.D.
(Foreign Secretary of the London Missionary Society).

Fifth Impression. With Two Maps and Sixteen other full-page Illustrations. Demy 8vo, cloth gilt, 568 pages, 3s. 6d.

"No one can read this story without being inwardly refreshed. The mere adventure side of it is stirring to a degree. It reveals a Pauline daring and endurance."—*Christian World*.

"The story of Dr. John's life is a very fascinating one, and it is told by Dr. Wardlaw Thompson with much literary skill, and excellent taste and judgment."—*The Westminster Gazette*.

W. HOLMAN BENTLEY

The Life and Labours of a Congo Pioneer.

By his Widow, H. M. BENTLEY.

With a Photogravure Portrait, Map, and 19 other Illustrations, 466 pages, demy 8vo, cloth gilt, 6s. net (by post, 6s. 5d.).

"This highly interesting memoir forms a worthy tribute to the honourable life and devoted labours of a notable pioneer of Christianity in Darkest Africa, who gave twenty-seven years to missionary work upon the Congo. . . . The book forms an admirably interesting life-story of successful mission work."—*The Standard*.

"Important in itself as the record of a notable, heroic and consecrated life, important also in the influence which it is sure to have on scores of young men and women in our Churches."—*The Baptist Times*.

LONDON: THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

TAMATE

The Life and Adventures of a Christian Hero.

By the late RICHARD LOVETT, M.A.

With 2 Maps and 15 full-page Illustrations. Large crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 3s. 6d.

"Every boy and girl ought to possess it . . . a vivid and inspiring narrative."—*British Weekly*.

"Tamate emerges from these pages a picturesque personality, with the halo of true romance about him . . . Mr. Lovett pictures the man as boys love to have their heroes pictured . . . A book which boys will relish and adults will enjoy."—*Christian World*.

"Not all the ingenuity which is spent on the making of blood-curdling tales could devise anything so strange, so terrible as the scenes in which Tamate bore his part, a part of unflinching courage and cheerfulness. He was another Ulysses, shrinking from no danger, but with a presence of Good Counsel always at his side."—*Spectator*.

PIONEERING IN NEW GUINEA

By JAMES CHALMERS.

Revised Edition. With 7 Illustrations, large crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 3s. 6d.

"We do not remember to have ever read a more interesting description of a savage people."—*Glasgow Herald*.

"The work is an admirable one, designed and carried out with skill and judgment. The illustrations form a prominent feature among the many attractions of a book deserving the most careful perusal and consideration."—*Morning Post*.

WORK AND ADVENTURE IN NEW GUINEA

By JAMES CHALMERS.

New Edition. With 7 Illustrations, large crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 3s. 6d.

This work describes seven years of work along the South-Eastern coast of New Guinea. Mr. Chalmers knew more of this country than any other European. He spoke the native languages, and his missionary journeys gave him much knowledge of native habits, &c. He always travelled unarmed, and was several times in imminent peril. The work abounds in interesting and thrilling incidents.

"An admirable sketch of life and work in New Guinea, where the triumphs of Christianity are most indisputably shown. . . . The book is one of very general interest, and should find readers in all ranks."—*Yorkshire Post*.

LONDON : THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

JAMES LEGGE
Missionary and Scholar.

By his Daughter, HELEN EDITH LEGGE.

With Photogravure Portrait and twenty-two other Illustrations. Large crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 3s. 6d.

"There is not a dry page in this most fascinating Biography."—*Dundee Courier*.

"It is an interesting book and a valuable contribution to the history of Chinese missions."—*Athenæum*.

"A story well worth telling, and sure to find many appreciative readers."—*Christian World*.

THOMAS WAKEFIELD
Missionary and Geographical Pioneer in East Equatorial Africa.

By E. S. WAKEFIELD.

Second Edition. With Portrait and 10 other Illustrations. Large crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 3s. 6d.

"From beginning to end the work is of absorbing interest."—*The Christian*.

"No one with a love for the foreign missionary cause will read this book without a feeling of profound thankfulness for such a devoted worker. We most heartily commend the work to readers of all ages."—*Methodist Times*.

"The story is romantic, adventurous, exciting, pathetic, and tragic by turns."—*Daily News*.

"The information conveyed, the vivid descriptions given, and the heroic life portrayed, all in a style singularly appropriate and suggestive, make the book delightful reading."—*Yorkshire Observer*.

HENRY MARTYN
Saint and Scholar.

First Modern Missionary to the Mohammedans.

By GEORGE SMITH, C.I.E., LL.D.,

Author of "Life of William Carey," "Life of Alexander Duff," etc.

With a Photogravure Portrait and 9 full-page Illustrations, 580 pages. Large crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 6s.

"Dr. Smith fills up with healthy human detail what before lay in bare outline. We have here a Martyn who can talk, laugh, and fall in love like other people, but who, while relating himself wholesomely in this way to the rest of his fellows, in what was special to his character and work, still rises to heights that pierce the heavens."—*Christian World*.

"The author knows his subject well, has arranged his materials skillfully, and carries the reader pleasantly along to the end."—*Spectator*.

LONDON: THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

THE BAGANDA AT HOME

With one hundred pictures of life and work in Uganda.

By C. W. HATTERSLEY.

80 full-page Illustrations, demy 8vo, cloth gilt, 5s. net.

Mr. Hattersley knows more about Uganda and its people than any author who is just now before the public. Would you know the difference between the Uganda of Mtesa or the Uganda of King Daudi; or how the British administer Uganda; or how the Baganda live from day to day; or how the missionaries have given the people a system of education; or how they marry in Uganda; or how the sleeping-sickness is slaying its thousands; or how the Gospel has won some of the most striking results in the history of Christendom? Then this book will tell you.

UGANDA BY PEN AND CAMERA

By C. W. HATTERSLEY.

Second Impression. With a Preface by T. F. VICTOR BUXTON, 34 Illustrations, large crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 2s.

"The narrative is a vivid and soul-stirring record of one of the most remarkable movements in the annals of missionary enterprise."—*Christian*.

"Mr. Hattersley's book is full of interesting details, from which one may get a clear idea of the country and its people."—*Spectator*.

AMONG THE TIBETANS

By ISABELLA L. BISHOP, F.R.G.S.,

Author of "Unbeaten Tracks in Japan," etc.

With 22 Illustrations, crown 8vo, cloth, 1s. 6d.; also in paper cover, 1s.

"This is one of the brightest, most life-like, and most perfectly balanced of Mrs. Bishop's works."—*Spectator*.

"A delightful book of travel, characterised by all the distinguished writer's purity of style, vividness of description, and attention to detail, which make her books so interesting and useful."—*Record*.

THE CROSS IN THE LAND OF THE TRIDENT.

Or, India from a Missionary Point of View.

By HARLAN P. BEACH.

Crown 8vo, cloth, 1s.

"The trident, the three-pronged fork, which appears in every Siva temple in India, has come to be regarded as the symbol of the Hindu religion. This little book deals with missionary work in India, but is in no sense a narrative. It, however, contains much matter which will prove attractive to ordinary readers."—*English Churchman*.

LONDON: THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

3 9088 00037 8208
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION LIBRARIES